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## ABSTRACT

This seminar, which involved 32 distributive teacher coordinators, was planned to help distributive educators identify the disadvantaged and their problems and to provide practical solutions for their needs, both in the classroom and in the business community. During the 1-week seminar, participants were divided into five subgroups to discuss each speaker's remarks and prepare guidelines for working with the disadvantaged. The participants generally were pleased with the seminar; half said they were very satisfied, and the other half were quite satisfied. Followup sessions were recommended. The presentations, guidelines, conclusions and recommendations are included in this report. (BH)

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# **Report of**

## **Distributive Teacher-Coordinator Leadership Development Seminar Concerning The Disadvantaged**



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**Department of Distributive Education  
College of Applied Sciences  
Western Michigan University  
Kalamazoo, Michigan**

ED0 47103

Report of

DISTRIBUTIVE TEACHER-COORDINATOR  
LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR  
CONCERNING THE DISADVANTAGED

Edited by

Adrian Trimpe and Raymond A. Dannenberg

September, 1970

Department of Distributive Education  
College of Applied Sciences  
Western Michigan University  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49001

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The work presented in this report was performed in a seminar at Western Michigan University under a grant from the Division of Vocational Education, Michigan Department of Education, Lansing, Michigan.

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## INTRODUCTION

A group of 32 distributive teacher-coordinators, upon invitation from Western Michigan University, met on the campus to participate in a leadership seminar concerning distributive education and the disadvantaged. The seminar commenced on Monday, July 27, and continued through Friday, July 31, 1970; and the meetings were held in the Distributive Education Building.

The seminar was under the direction of the Department of Distributive Education under a grant from the Division of Vocational Education, Michigan Department of Education at Lansing.

If distributive educators are to be concerned with the disadvantaged or the youth with special needs in their schools, then they have a responsibility for developing a work readiness among some of them for the field of distribution. So the purpose of calling the seminar was threefold on Western's part, and they were:

1. to make the distributive educators more perceptive, aware, and knowledgeable about the problems of the disadvantaged;
2. to develop their ability to identify these youth with special needs; and
3. to seek out practical solutions to meet the needs of the disadvantaged both in the classroom and in the business community.

Those responsible for the planning of the seminar proposed to do this by a systematic approach to the problem.

The problem was divided into parts, and for each part a consultant was obtained and asked to direct his remarks to his assigned portion of the problem. The seminar participants were divided into five working sub-groups of six members each with four work sessions during the week to meet and discuss each presenter's remarks regarding his portion of the problem and then prepare guidelines for themselves and the other distributive teacher-coordinators to follow when working with the disadvantaged in their schools. The guidelines as developed by the sub-groups and the presentations of the consultants are included in the report.

So that the participants, the teacher-coordinators, might be "tuned-in" to the theme of the seminar and the presentations made by the consultants, Constance D. Cooper, Intergroup Relations Specialist from the Detroit Public Schools, was given this assignment, and she did, through the use of "sensitivity training." She



first explained the various methods of sensitivity training and then involved the group by putting the participants to work in sub-groups using the "organization development" technique on a problem census.

The staff of the Department of Distributive Education at Western Michigan University wishes to extend its appreciation to Richard Shupe, Supervisor of Distributive Education, Division of Vocational Education, Michigan Department of Education, for making the seminar possible and to the participants and the consultants for the time and effort expended by them which made the seminar successful and a report possible.

Adrian Trimpe

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## SEMINAR PARTICIPANTS

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### Distributive Educators

|                      |                                |                   |
|----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Emma Berg            | Northeastern H.S.              | Detroit           |
| Jacqueline Britten   | Taylor H.S.                    | Taylor            |
| Richard Bunce        | Central H.S.                   | Kalamazoo         |
| J. A. Christensen    | Delta College                  | University Center |
| Douglas Clark        | Everett H.S.                   | Lansing           |
| Tim Eis              | Lee M. Thurston H.S.           | Detroit           |
| Russell Fancett      | Lee M. Thurston H.S.           | Detroit           |
| Peter Findley        | St. Clair & Marine City H.S.   | St. Clair         |
| David Finley         | Flint Community Junior College | Flint             |
| Norman Gapske        | Albion H.S.                    | Albion            |
| Robert Gabridge      | Lake Shore H.S.                | St. Clair Shores  |
| Esther Hanes         | Cass Technical H.S.            | Detroit           |
| Aileen Harkins       | Saginaw H.S.                   | Saginaw           |
| Raymond Hartman      | Arthur Hill H.S.               | Saginaw           |
| Donald E. Heilig     | Grand Haven Sr. H.S.           | Grand Haven       |
| Barbara Hunziker     | Brandywine H.S.                | Niles             |
| William H. Josephson | Marshall Public School         | Marshall          |
| Neland Klonek        | Oak Park H.S.                  | Oak Park          |
| Sydney P. Kramer     | Comstock H.S.                  | Comstock          |
| Ray Lawson           | Dondero H.S.                   | Royal Oak         |
| William Lepech       | Rockford Sr. H.S..             | Rockford          |
| Barbara Logan        | Cody H.S.                      | Detroit           |
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| Lyle Monette         | Muskegon H.S.                  | Muskegon          |



Distributive Educators - continued

Richard Robinson  
William C. Rogers  
Harold D. Scoville  
James Seltzer  
Leo E. Styer  
Edward Traskal  
Maurice Strong  
Donald Ritter

Cheboygan Area H.S.  
Pontiac Central H.S.  
Clio Area H.S..  
Flint Schools  
Lincoln Park H.S.  
Pershing H.S.  
Swartz Creek H.S.  
Pioneer H.S.

Cheboygan  
Pontiac  
Clio  
Flint  
Lincoln Park  
Detroit  
Swartz Creek  
Ann Arbor



## PRESENTERS AND CONSULTANTS

Mr. Robert Bailey, Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinator at Western High School in Detroit, has made a name for himself with students and coordinators as a master of motivating youth to become involved in DECA activities. He is a newcomer to teaching, but he has had remarkable success with classroom projects.

Dr. James G. Bennett, Distributive Education Teacher-Educator at Rutgers University, earned his doctorate with a dissertation on students' perception of work in general merchandise stores. Research has been his specialization in business and education fields.

Mrs. Theresa Brinson, newly appointed Distributive Education Supervisor with the Detroit Public Schools, has participated in a number of conferences related to meeting the needs of culturally deprived youth on local, state, and national levels. She is a former Distributive Education coordinator at Northwestern High School, where she has given a great deal of attention to the use of instructional aids in working with the disadvantaged.

Mrs. Constance Cooper, Intergroup Relations Specialist with the Division of School Community Relations for the Detroit Public Schools, is also on the Urban Extension Instruction Staff of Wayne State University. Sensitivity training for school and community is her special field of operation.

Dr. Edward T. Ferguson, Jr., Research Specialist in Vocational Education at the Research Center of Ohio State University, has had broad experience as a teacher-educator, distributive education coordinator, and business executive. He is widely known for his professional articles in educational publications of national scope.

Mrs. Augusta Hatton, Teacher-Coordinator of Distributive Education at Southeastern High School in Detroit, quietly performs miracles in working with disadvantaged youth. She has excellent rapport with teenagers, student teachers, and fellow coordinators.

Mr. William O. Haynes, Associate Professor of Distributive Education at Western Michigan University, played a key role in the development of the nationally known Food Distribution Program at Western. His talks and publications mark him as an authority in food industry training.

Mr. John Kushner, Office Education Supervisor with the Detroit Public Schools, has been a teacher-coordinator, department head, night school principal, and Wayne State University instructor. He personifies the involvement recommended for success with youth programs.

Dr. Mark E. Lewis, Superintendent of Schools in Benton Harbor, has demonstrated administrative interest in job centers and work-study programs--first in California, then in Nevada, and now in Michigan. He is eminently qualified to speak on educational programs for the disadvantaged.

Presenters and Consultants - continued

Mrs. Marjorie Peirce, Distributive Education Coordinator of Cass Technical High School in Detroit, conducts a highly successful program to meet the needs of young people with varying degrees of interests and abilities in the vocational field. Her background in store work has been exceptionally helpful.

Mr. Richard Shupe, State Supervisor of Office and Distributive Education in Michigan, markedly encourages vocational preparation for disadvantaged youth. His support of D.E. programs is well known locally and on state and national levels.

Mr. Lee D. Smith, Vice President of the Jewel Food Stores in Chicago, is a well-qualified spokesman for the employer's role in providing meaningful employment and training opportunities for the disadvantaged minority. His commitment to organizations involved in economic development projects occupies much of the time given to his business career.

Mr. Jess M. Walker, Associate Professor of Teacher Education at Western Michigan University, has specialized in teacher training for working with the educationally deprived children. In this capacity, he has been a consultant with the U. S. Office of Education, the Michigan State Department of Education, and the Kalamazoo Public Schools.

# **GUIDELINES**

**Resulting from Workshop Discussions**



# GUIDELINES

Resulting from Workshop Discussions

## GUIDELINES

A. How can Distributive Education meet its responsibilities of serving youth with special needs? Suggested recommendations are:

1. Determine exactly the special needs and problems of the students.
2. Encourage good attendance, work habits, cooperative spirit, communication between peer groups, teachers, family, and employers.
3. Provide cultural experiences outside the home.
4. Provide more effective related instruction by: (1) using student assistants; (2) grouping students with similar needs; (3) greater use of specialists, resource persons, and audio-visual aids; and (4) use of a variety of teaching methods.
5. Publicize accomplishments of disadvantaged students.
6. Participate actively in school-community affairs to determine activities which will render pride, achievement, and recognition.
7. Establish specialized programs such as checker education, waiter-waitress training, service station selling, etc., and operating an on-going business.
8. Provide vocational counseling and job placement on a 12-month basis, including financial aid information for further education.
9. Implement Michigan's Cooperative Plan D in order to secure federal subsidies for students.
10. Determine methods for providing family financial assistance such as: transportation, clothing, dental, food, etc.
11. Obtain a properly equipped distributive education classroom.
12. Use advisory committees effectively.
13. Make use of team effort and team teaching.
14. Have high school counseling and placement service on a 12-month basis.
15. Relieve teacher-coordinators of other duties such as: study hall supervision, lunch and hall duties, so that they will have more time for counseling students.
16. Provide extra time for coaching of the disadvantaged students by utilizing after school time and summer vacation, similar to "Headstart."

B. How can you identify students who have special needs?

1. Observe and analyze students in the high school--taking into consideration grooming, school behavior, peer acceptance or rejection, manner of speech, ability to communicate with others.
2. Talk and listen to teachers, students, counselors, clergymen, school special service personnel, and parents.
3. Review students' records such as test scores, grades, attendance, etc.

C. How can one secure employer commitment to provide part-time opportunities for students with special needs?

1. Make placement a concern of the advisory committee.
2. Obtain and use employer reimbursement provisions available under the Vocational Education Act of 1968.
3. Use personal contact with employers effectively. Point out success of previous students. Ask for cooperation of the employer.
4. Learn strengths and weaknesses of the students and be able to relate these to employer needs. Be perfectly truthful with employers when securing placement for these students.
5. Assure the employers that you will work closely with them when taking these students.
6. Have minority groups represented on advisory committee.
7. Use all media available to promote the distributive education program and the disadvantaged students.
8. Become involved in many civic activities in order to establish better rapport with employers.

D. How can Distributive Education develop flexible instructional content involving basic occupational competencies essential to entry-level jobs for disadvantaged youth?

1. Avoid complete reliance upon textbooks and reading materials.
2. Use the approach, "What does one need to know to be successful on this job or activity?"
3. Utilize current research done on types of instructional materials needed by the disadvantaged.
4. Get active student response and involvement.



5. Use the project method effectively.
  6. Make effective use of a variety of teaching methods in each class session.
  7. Make use of advisory committee for this purpose.
  8. Review the literature concerning youth with special needs.
  9. Make use of prepared materials from business, the Department of Education, colleges and universities; and publishing companies.
  10. Use programmed materials for instruction. The coordinator must understand the psychology behind the use of programmed instruction.
  11. Involve students in the planning of their instructional program.
- E. What is the teacher-coordinator's role in using the "more learning and less teaching" approach with disadvantaged students?
1. Strive to use empathy in understanding the student's needs.
  2. Incorporate as much individualized instruction as possible.
  3. Lead instead of direct; question instead of tell; interest instead of bore.
  4. Be varied and flexible--use field trips, projects, role playing, students who have completed the program as speakers, tape recordings of demonstrations, audio-visual aids. Emphasis should be on total student involvement in the learning process, using every known teaching method.
  5. Investigate possibility of a student-operated business enterprise.
  6. Use resource people such as businessmen, former graduates, etc.
- F. What instructional content and techniques does checker education offer in working with the disadvantaged? Suggestions offered were:
1. Students learn by doing.
  2. They learn easier and faster in a simulated environment.
  3. Students learn from one another.
  4. A great variety of teaching methods is used in the checker education program.
  5. Students have an opportunity to develop competency on same equipment used in the on-the-job situation.



G. How can DECA involve the disadvantaged in meaningful activities demanding follow-through with responsibilities and duties?

1. Stimulates the students through teamwork.
2. Promotes occupational careers, peer acceptance, and group work.
3. Offers students an opportunity to function in group work.
4. Stimulates competition among students.
5. Provides opportunity to experience success and encourages participation in projects.
6. Develops leadership ability.
7. Teaches teamwork and pride in doing a good job.

Remember to gear the club's activities to the cultural level of the students.

H. What problems might Distributive Education coordinators encounter in working to meet the special needs of students?

1. Regarding students

- a. lack of confidence, motivation, inability to affect honest communications with others, poor attendance, poor attitude and undesirable personality traits.
- b. lack of desire to learn, insufficient number of training stations, limited span of attention, poor health, malnutrition, grooming, hygiene and little family life.
- c. lack of basic skills, limited access to newspapers and magazines, lack of knowledge of business and economics and fear of change.
- d. the students' environment (family and community) has not provided the necessary learning experiences that are needed to understand the traditional instructional materials.
- e. need for instant rewards as motivation factors.

2. Regarding schools and school staff

- a. limited budget for equipment and supplies
- b. need for more cooperation and better understanding of counselors, teachers, and administrators.
- c. lack of clerical assistance.

- d. rigidity of course structure to meet individual needs.
  - e. frustration to teachers of slow student progress.
  - f. heavy class loads which limit individual instruction.
  - g. lack of guidelines to use in teaching the disadvantaged youth.
- 3. Regarding parents' ingrained academic goals for their children
  - 4. Regarding employers who need to develop understanding and support
- I. Governmental and social agencies that you can call upon for guidance and assistance in meeting the needs of the disadvantaged.
- 1. Local health organizations
  - 2. Local labor unions
  - 3. Local office of Michigan Employment Security Commission
  - 4. Local chamber of commerce
  - 5. Local service clubs
  - 6. County Intermediate School District office
  - 7. County Department of Social Welfare
  - 8. State Vocational Rehabilitation office
  - 9. Urban League
  - 10. Office of Economic Opportunity
  - 11. National Association of Advancement for Colored People
  - 12. Sales and Marketing Executives International
  - 13. Michigan Department of Education
  - 14. Michigan Retailers Association
  - 15. Teacher Education institutions
- J. How can educational programs for the disadvantaged be implemented with emphasis on work-study plans?
- 1. Must understand that one of the imperative needs of youth is a saleable skill.

2. Realize a high school diploma is essential for youth today.
3. Need an expanded educational program for the disadvantaged prior to high school because many students are disadvantaged from the day they enter kindergarten.
4. Need a careful follow-up on attendance--lack of attendance and early dropout go hand in hand.
5. Employ an occupational information specialist in the schools.
6. Employ a distributive education teacher-coordinator especially to work with the disadvantaged program.
7. Plan for team teaching between academic areas and distributive education.
8. Implement the Parkway Project plan being used in Philadelphia.
9. Require all junior high students to take an occupational information course.
10. Expose all high school students to the world of work prior to graduation from high school.

K. What preparation should the teacher education institutions provide prospective teachers in working with the disadvantaged?

1. Provide early contact for prospective teachers with children and adults in disadvantaged areas in a variety of school and nonschool related experiences.
2. Apply research and theory from the disciplines to specific needs and problems of the disadvantaged.
3. Establish an intern program for securing experience in working with community agencies concerned with the disadvantaged.
4. Provide more exposure to remedial and diagnostic procedures and to methods for individualizing instruction.
5. Stress the need for understanding the disadvantaged individual, who he is, his social and psychological characteristics, what he thinks and feels.
6. Make prospective teachers knowledgeable of methods and materials particularly suited to alleviate anxiety and improve the individual's self-concept.
7. Prepare teachers so they can deal with the handicapped learner as well as the talented one.
8. Stress the need to make schooling vital and useful to these students.

# **PRESENTATIONS**



## PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SEMINAR

Ann R. Lind

We have heard it said again and again that the passage of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968 ushered in a new era--marked by a dedication to solve education and employment needs not only for more people but for the disadvantaged people overlooked before. Since the beginning of public vocational education in 1917, effort has been given to meet the changing needs of individuals in a changing society. However, there has been little concerted effort until the 1960's to meet the needs of those students who failed to fit the pattern for success in regular programs. We probably have all complained at some time or another that our program was becoming a dumping ground for students who couldn't conform to the general pattern of education. To avoid the problem, we set up a stringent set of qualifications preventing the less able students from entering existing programs.

Now it's a new ball game, as the saying goes. There is an urgency for young people to develop work-readiness in preparation for an occupational pursuit by the time they leave high school. The role of the teacher in all this is paramount. And that's where our distributive education seminar enters the picture for one full week at Western Michigan University.

The purposes and objectives of this seminar are concerned with teacher-coordinator motivation to tackle hopefully the need to prepare disadvantaged students to become employable participants in the existing world of work. This does not mean we'll be experts by the end of the week, but there should be a noticeable awakening on our part to the problems of our times; namely,

1. The daily need to be more perceptive, more aware, more knowledgeable about the problems of the disadvantaged.
2. The development of an ability to identify youth with special needs.
3. The creative imagination to seek out practical solutions to meet the needs of the disadvantaged in the classroom and in the community.

These are our reasons for being here, and these are our reasons for inviting people as consultants who have had experience in working with the disadvantaged. These three objectives will permeate all our sessions. And don't be surprised if they are repeated time and time again every day. Somehow each one of us must some way define, some way identify, and some way find solutions to the needs of the disadvantaged. Involvement is the key word, and this is what we aim for this week--as you will also when you return to your school situation, with a real commitment to implement the ideas that emerge here.

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Finally, let us avoid a hassle about terms. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 defines students with special needs as those who have academic, socio-economic, or other handicaps that prevent them from succeeding in the regular vocational education program. Disadvantaged youth are usually young people from the lower socio-economic groups who are noticeably deficient in cultural and academic backgrounds. For our purposes, the two terminologies will be used interchangeably.

With the three-fold purpose in mind of defining, identifying, and solving, it is now time for us to get the show on the road.

## SENSITIVITY TRAINING FOR SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY

Constance D. Cooper

Psychologists, sociologists, and other experts in the field of human relations generally agree that if one is to develop positive working relations with people, one must have a sensitivity to their needs, their concerns, their interests, their goals, and also a clear understanding of their perceptions of you and your role in relation to them. In formulating positive working relationships, one question to be asked is: What is expected of you and what are the contributions your own understandings and skills and knowledge have prepared you to make to assist groups in identifying and attaining goals which have a relevance to their life styles?

In the past few years, more and more educators have involved themselves in various experiences designed to develop these sensitivities and understandings. Frequently, these have been called "sensitivity training" experiences. Consequently, the phrase "sensitivity training" has come to have a variety of meanings for many people. Trying to understand others is certainly not a new development in education; however, some of the processes which have been developed over the past few years in order to facilitate this understanding do have elements of originality and uniqueness.

The basic idea of "sensitivity training" is an outgrowth of a training center program developed by Leland Bradford, Ronald Lippitt, and Kenneth Benne more than twenty years ago. Mr. Bradford, then director of the Adult Education Division of the National Education Association, in cooperation with Lippitt and Benne, established the National Training Lab at Bethel, Maine, and pioneered the T-group, or Training Group, format for workshops devoted to the study of group dynamics or human relations. The traditional T-group consists of a small group of people, ideally 10-16, who meet in a special setting for approximately two weeks. Assigned to the group is a qualified trainer who guides the group in creating an atmosphere in which the motivations for typical human behavior are brought to the surface. It is assumed that once these motivations are identified, they can then be logically discussed and analyzed. Individual members of the group have an opportunity to observe both their own behavior and that of others in the group; discover sources or reasons for different kinds of behavior; and identify the effect specific behaviors have on the functioning of the group. The T-group process can be an intensive emotional experience which contains within it some aspects of the psychological therapy grouping. It can provide powerful impetus to the improvement of the human relations skills of normal people; however, its success requires its direction and control by a thoroughly qualified trainer.

Varied forms of "sensitivity training" have evolved from the original T-group design in response to needs of specific times or places. These



include Encounter Groups, Confrontation Sessions, Organizational Development Labs, and Non-Verbal Exercise Groups.

In Encounter Groups the trainer encourages group members to explore in depth their feelings and motivations as well as the feelings and motivations of other group members. The objective is to stimulate an exchange between group members under a minimum of reserve and defensiveness in order to achieve a maximum of openness and honesty, the assumption being that this experience will lead to improved understanding and communication between people and provide for needed changes in behavior and attitudes.

Confrontation Sessions have most frequently involved groups of whites who are "confronted" by militant blacks. The rationale for these groups has been that the social conditions which provide the underpinnings for racism in our society demand a maximum dose of aggression and hostility in order to convince the whites of the seriousness of the situation and the need for change.

Non-Verbal Exercise Group techniques are being pioneered by Esalen on the West Coast. The techniques employed are numerous and range from simple exercises with a minimum of body contact to physically intimate and emotionally revealing tactics. An example of the effective use of these techniques was the laboratory session involving white policemen and black community representatives in East St. Louis, Illinois.

The term Organization Development Laboratories refers to a variety of intensive experiences which use small groups for consultation, problem-solving, and re-education of their individual participants. This form of sensitivity training stresses the development of interpersonal understanding aimed at improving work efficiency and interaction between employees or colleagues--and focuses on personal growth for organizational adaptation to change. It is essentially a program of applied human relations training that seeks to assist groups in identifying viable goals and to remove both institutional and personal resistance to needed change.

This process focuses on actual problems faced by individuals in their respective schools and communities rather than on a therapeutic approach to individual development. Participants thus become more conscious of the sources of their own attitudes and actions while also coming to appreciate more fully the pressures--both personal and institutional--that influence the action of their colleagues. More specifically, small groups of persons organize into task-oriented groups whose members are made to feel free to express personal feelings and attitudes in an unthreatening atmosphere of honesty, openness, and unity of purpose. They explore ways to develop more constructive self-behavior and learn to relate better to each other in their everyday roles. Together, they identify individual and common problems and concerns and formulate strategies for change.

The unintelligent, unskillful application of any of these forms of sensitivity training processes can act to make a bad situation intolerable



where participants are led to the revelation of intimate personal information that acts to make continuing work relationships more difficult, if not impossible. The individual's right to a private self must be respected. However, sensitivity training which focuses on the achievement of greater understanding, the identification of common concerns, the establishment of common goals and purposes, and the achievement of these goals and purposes has a positive role to play in any school community.

The Extensive experience and experimentation with the various kinds of sensitivity training has shown that the "Organization Development Lab" format is the one best suited to the goals of educators. T-Grouping, Encounter Groups, Confrontation Sessions, and other similar processes tend to create degrees of emotional involvement and stress which, if not developed under the supervision of competent, professionally prepared trainers, can lead to emotional upset, disorganization, and reactions at cross purposes with your initially determined goals.

It is the Organizational Development kind of sensitivity training, or human relations sensitizing experience, that I would like us to become involved in this morning.

As Coordinators and Preparatory Teachers in the Distributive Education program, you have some rather special and unique concerns as you develop programs for students with special needs. The nature of your program is such that you frequently must relate to and interact with your students and colleagues on an intimate and personal basis. You are concerned with the total development of the student and the creation of a Distributive Education program that meets the needs of all your students. In order to accomplish these ends, there are certain factors you must consider:

- First      How can you identify students who have special needs?
- Second     What are some of the problems you have encountered in working to meet the special needs of these students?
- Third      What is your responsibility to students with special needs?
- Fourth     What are the responsibilities of those students to you and to the school?
- Fifth      What changes in educational practices and procedures are needed to make the D.E. program better meet the needs of all students?

We wish you to address yourselves to these specific questions in what we call a small group problem census format. Working in groups of four, we want you to list responses to the five questions posed and then rank your responses as explained on your problem census form. We will then come back together and follow the same process as a total group. From this experience, we will be able to identify significant areas of concern to which you will need to address yourselves during the rest of this workshop and in the fall, as you begin a new school year.

DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION WORKSHOP

Western Michigan University  
Vocational Distributive Education  
Teacher-Coordinator Leadership Development  
Seminar Concerning the Disadvantaged

Problem Census Form

Please list in the rank order your responses to the following questions from what you consider to be most to least essential, important or significant:

I. How can you identify students who have special needs?

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II. What are some of the problems encountered in working to meet the special needs of students?

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III. What is the teacher's responsibility to students with special needs?

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IV. What are the students' responsibilities and duties?

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V. What changes in educational practices and procedures are needed to make the Distributive Education program at your school better meet the needs of all Distributive Education students?

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## DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION AND THE DISADVANTAGED

Edward T. Ferguson, Jr.

Perhaps many of my remarks this morning will be distasteful to you as distributive education teacher-coordinators. Many may be hard for you to accept, particularly if you have been teaching for several years.

To begin with, I believe one can make a strong case for the fact that distributive education, particularly the way that it is taught in a majority of our high schools today, should be a vocational program for only disadvantaged students. Now, in this vein of thought, I am not referring to the term disadvantaged and being black as one in the same. What I am speaking of, though, are those students in our schools with physical, psychological, social, cultural, economic, and/or academic limitations which prevent them from succeeding in the world of work without some form of prior training or education in the field of distribution and marketing.

Over the past few years I have slowly come to believe that a great majority of the students we now have in our distributive education classes throughout the United States would be successful working in the field of distribution and marketing without ever having attended a high school class in distributive education.

All one has to do is look around at the great majority of high school students who are working part-time, right next to your distributive education students, making just as much, or maybe even more, money and for the most part doing just as good a job, to realize that in most cases our classroom instruction is being wasted on students who could get along just as well without us.

But, year after year, we continue to ignore these facts as we insist on selecting the best possible students for inclusion in our programs. And to add to this, we cry extremely loud about guidance and administrative personnel "who are using our classes as dumping grounds." Now these selection procedures at one time made a great deal of sense, especially in the 40's and 50's, but they have little justification in the 70's. In the 40's and 50's the jobs our distributive education students were able to get and hold with a high school education were, for the most part, adequate for the times. This is not the case today.

Let us for a moment take a look at the kind of positions open in the field today, as well as the people who are filling these positions, and why.

First, the area of retailing for distributive education has, for the most part, placed a majority of its students in retailing occupations. All one has to do is walk into any department store, variety store, discount



store, or specialty store and observe the employees on the selling floor. Who are they, either mature women seeking a supplementary income or students out to pick up a few extra dollars in spending money? Oh, yes, you can note some exceptions, especially in the men's department, in furniture and large appliance sales; but these exceptions are relatively few. It takes no reasoning at all to see why most retail employees, at least those on the selling floor, are either mature women or part-time high school students. Money, or I should say the lack of it, is the pure and simple answer. What young person in this day who has average or better-than-average intellectual ability, is physically and psychologically sound, who has no social or cultural limitations, would want to make his living in the year 1970 as a retail sales employee earning from \$2.00 to \$2.50 an hour? Is it, then, any wonder that most employees on the sales floor fall into the two categories I have mentioned? Have you ever really honestly asked yourself why retail sales pays so little? The answer again is simple. It demands little or no skill or training to obtain the initial position, and it does not compensate those who possess both skill and training before entering the field.

I could draw you the same picture for most of the service industries and a great majority of the areas in wholesaling where distributive education students are placed. The plain fact is that there is little future for the above-average or average high school student in the entry-level sales positions in retailing in the 1970's. Yet we are still trying to attract this type of student into our high school programs. Now, I don't want to leave you with the idea that the entire field of distribution and marketing has nothing for the average or above-average student in this decade, but much of the field as it exists today has little to offer a person of this type, especially entering sales level. It demands no training and does not reward those who possess it. Our employment demands for this type of student should not be for entry-level positions but, for this kind of student, must be at the mid-management or management levels.

High school programs, then, if they are to be meaningful to this student, must provide training for higher-level positions. If we can't or are unable to provide training at this higher level, then let's concentrate all our energies on providing training for those high school students who must have our help to enter the labor market in distribution and marketing. Let's concentrate our efforts on those who cannot succeed without us. Let's concentrate on those who, at this point in their lives, do not have the ability to earn more than a minimum wage at an entry-level position. Let's do something to provide a meaningful experience for those who need special attention, those with physical, psychological, social, cultural, economic and/or academic limitations--the disadvantaged. It is this group that I know we can do the most for in our high school programs of distributive education.

For the most part these individuals will not be difficult to identify; he or she is black, or doing poorly in most school subjects, or perhaps at the point of dropout; they also more than likely have little or no idea of what they will do after they drop out or, for that matter,



probably their plans are not firm even if they do complete school under general program. Our inner-city streets are filled with this type of individual; they are the products of our schools and our political system which have educated them for joblessness, as well as throwing up insurmountable barriers to keep them from obtaining employment.

Personally the black disadvantaged students are on the horns of a seemingly impossible dilemma. On one side is a newly founded black pride which demands that they function in society at a higher level than did their ancestors. This is tied very closely with the black power movement which has put great worth on the values of a college education. Yet most are realistic enough to grasp that the results of ten years in our school system has denied most this option. On the other side is the realism of earning a living at something, but most young men have seen the results of preparing in high school for occupations in the trades. They are only too aware of the impossibility of breaking down the discrimination which is prevalent in the trade unions.

It may be important to say at this point that with the coming of the black pride and the black power movements, for the most part young blacks, male and female, are unwilling to accept employment in what they call "nigger jobs." Again, the results are evident on the streets of any inner-city.

We in distributive education can do something about the situation, and federal legislation expects us to do something. Many black youths will now seek entry-level jobs in the distributive occupations not for the money, but for the psychological need to function in a white collar environment. This is now the strongest thing we have going for us in distributive education as it relates to the teaching of disadvantaged youth. Working in a distributive occupation satisfies the need of the individual which is associated with black pride as well as taking the pressure from the individual which results from the black power movement in his immediate environmental press.

Distributive education and cooperative office education are the only two service areas offering high school vocational education which can come close to satisfying the needs of this emergent black youth. In these two service areas the black can see himself moving toward a higher social status through his occupation.

If we were in New York or Miami, I could build for you a similar case which pertains to the Puerto Rican or Cuban student. Their cultural and social problems are similar in most respects to the black. The same would also hold true in the Southwest with relation to the Mexican-American population. Distributive education has a role to play in the education of these minority groups. We in this field, though, have to define this role and, in many cases, tailor our local programs to the needs of the specific disadvantaged populations.

Another category of persons within the spectrum of the disadvantaged which can benefit from a high school program in distribution and marketing

are those with physical disabilities. Although relatively few in number within our schools, these students desperately need training for occupations which do not exclude them because of their physical handicaps. Several clusters of the distributive occupations offer such an opportunity for the physical handicapped. This type of student should also be sought out. Careers in distributive education should be discussed with them in relation to their specific handicap, and we should undertake individual programs to train these students.

Probably the largest single group falling into the category of youth with special needs or the disadvantaged population are those who possess academic limitations. Now here I am not talking about those who are referred to as "special education students," although I believe with this group we also can be helpful, but more along the line of team teaching in conjunction with a special education teacher. The group of students I am referring to are those whose academic limitations put them at a disadvantage in relation to obtaining and holding a job after completion of as much education as they are capable of receiving.

This is the student who, over the years, we have tried to select out of distributive education. These students are the ones who many administrators have put into the distributive education curriculum because there was no other place for them. In the past we have, for the most part, been able to ignore the teaching of any significant numbers of students with academic difficulties. I do not believe that this will be the case in the future for two basic reasons: (1) the number of students with limited academic ability remaining in school after sixteen is increasing and (2) the entry-level jobs in distribution and marketing, especially the sales jobs, are not so poorly paid in relation to other industries that we shall have difficulty attracting the average high school students into a vocational program which basically trains for initial employment in this field.

This radical change in the type of student which many of our distributive education programs will be or are now being faced with is of great concern to us in research and teacher education. Our concern stems first from the knowledge that we have not prepared our teachers to function with students with low academic abilities or any of the other limitations that cause students to be considered disadvantaged. And secondly from a basic philosophy that has been with our field of years--that we must make available to employers the best-trained students our school has to offer who have outstanding potential as workers in the field. The latter has been generally what we have been doing over the years. The situation that has occurred, though, is that most employers have viewed our students as a good source of cheap labor and have not provided responsible positions to our trained personnel even though these students were more than adequately prepared.

I wish at this time I could tell you that we know the best way to prepare teachers who will function in distributive education programs



designed for disadvantaged youth. Unfortunately, to date no one has come up with a truly defensible operational pattern. There are, though, some indications as to what it takes to be a "successful teacher" when the majority of the students taught are considered to be disadvantaged.

We do know that some teachers are successful when they teach disadvantaged students. The problem exists in that they apparently cannot formulate their approaches theoretically. They can and do, however, demonstrate it in the classroom. Those of us who deal in theoretical formulations might well take a cue from those who are demonstrating in practice that there is something to be known in this area. I believe as teachers we can gain a great deal of insight if those teachers who are good practitioners in the classroom concentrate not solely upon what they are doing and upon getting results, but also try to find the answer to the question--Why am I successful? Later in the week you will be hearing from one of these highly successful teachers, Mrs. Hatton. I would hope you would explore with her the question, Why is she successful?

In almost any school there are a few teachers who are considered by almost everyone to be effective. Here, however, we are usually confronted with a personality, a style--the characteristics that seem to work well with disadvantaged youth. I doubt, though, that these factors were ever developed in our teacher training institutions. It is probably true more than we would like to admit that some teachers of the disadvantaged students do succeed and maintain their faith in themselves and their students through their unusual personalities; however, as Harry Rivlin points out, "No system of mass education can rely on unusual success by unusual teachers."<sup>1</sup>

Currently, The Center for Vocational and Technical Education is involved in a research project with 160 distributive education teachers located throughout the United States. The study is concerned with successful teachers who function in a predominately black inner-city environment and successful teachers who function in a predominately white suburban environment. Data are now almost complete and indicate that there are different patterns for success depending on the teaching environment. Our hope is to build a profile of a successful teacher in each environment and combine this profile with the teaching tasks and practices that tend to make a teacher successful in each environmental setting. I would like to explore with you some ideas resulting from the preliminary data on the preparation of distributive education teachers who teach disadvantaged youth. At this point these are no more than educated guesses as to what it takes to be a successful teacher when the student population is considered to be disadvantaged. First of all, I would like to say, though, that my remaining remarks are pointed today toward only a single group of the disadvantaged--the black in an urban setting. I have chosen this group as it represents the largest single

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<sup>1</sup>Harry N. Rivlin, "New Teachers for New Immigrants," Teachers College Record, (May, 1965), pp. 707-718.



population in a taxonomy of the disadvantaged which can benefit from a distributive education program and because Michigan has a large black population located in urban settings.

I should also like to point out one other basic belief I personally feel holds true, no matter what the student population may be. It is, a good teacher is a good teacher, is a good teacher. By this I mean that if a teacher is truly outstanding, he or she will be successful no matter what the student population may be.

I do, though, think we can help all teachers "load the dice," so to speak, in their favor, for there are techniques and practices that have been seen as successful when dealing with disadvantaged youth.

First and foremost, I see an understanding by teachers of the culture of the black adolescent as being crucial. On one hand, there is the student environment as it relates to the school; and, on the other, there is his environment as it relates to the street. You will notice I did not say the environment of the home, for home and street to the black adolescent may be hard to separate. This perhaps is one very fundamental difference between white children in a suburban environment and black children in an inner-city environment. Further, by understanding the black adolescent culture, I do not mean you should necessarily agree with it; but it is also not your right or responsibility to disagree with it or in any way attempt to change cultural attitudes, even when these attitudes are in direct conflict with your personal values. This is probably the first and foremost cardinal sin committed by most white or black middle-class oriented teachers.

You may ask, then, how does one who is really interested gain a knowledge of the black adolescent's cultural environment? Perhaps the simplest way is to listen. Really listen to what your students are saying. This means in the halls, before class, after class, as well as during class. It means showing a personal interest in what your students are doing in their personal lives. It means moving slowly, with some care and caution, into short trips to the inner-city areas. And, probably most of all, being interested means now showing your shock or disapproval of what you see and hear. I truly believe that only when you can understand the black adolescent as a person, can you effectively be a teacher to that individual.

Let's get one most important thing out in the open right now. That is, the fear involved in going even as far as I have described with the black adolescent. Fear, I mean real physical fear, for self. All of us who have reached for this understanding have experienced it. And it is nothing to be ashamed of. There is also another fear besides physical fear which one may experience. That is, the fear coming from one's inner-self, that fear which knows and asks these gnawing questions: Do I really believe blacks are equal? Am I a racist deep down in my heart? Until one can come to grips with this inner fear, he will never cope with the outer physical fear. For the physical fear is tied closely with being found out. Being found out that one is playing the game because it is the thing

to do, or it is what is expected of a person like oneself. And have no doubts, the students will eventually find this person out.

How do we, then, if we are truly sincere, get an insight into the black adolescent's environment of the street and the home? One way is to analyze the black power structure of the community which pulls the strings both on the surface and behind the scenes. Another is to become familiar with the agencies, both public and private, which operate in the black community. It may mean spending part of a day in the receiving ward of the city hospital which services the inner-city, or making rounds with the probation officer or welfare investigator. But, probably most important of all, it means getting into the homes of the students and talking with the adults in the home. Even better than talking, listen to what they are saying. Walk around the black business community during the day, talk with the merchants and, even more important again, listen. These few simple things I have mentioned are not the whole story which will lead to an understanding of the black student's community press, but it's a start; and it may be enough to open the door.

Let's talk for a minute about the school environment. Many black adolescents feel school is useless to them. They see no relation to what happens in school to what happens in their real world out of school. What happens in school is, for the most part, meaningless to the black student for he only sees the reality of real life. He sees what his older brothers or sisters or friends are now doing after going through the same schools he is attending, and he says, "Why bother?"

Well, I hope it is obvious to you, at this point, that we are not going to be successful with the black adolescent by giving him the same old distributive education we have been dispensing to white middle-class kids. We cannot get away with it in the inner-city.

I may have painted a dark picture of the state of affairs with the black student's environment and with what goes on in the inner-city schools, and it may get even worse. It can come as quite a shock to us, as teachers, the first time we hear a black student say, "You can't teach me nothing, whitey." This opens up a whole other area, that of black teachers for black schools. And I am not so sure that it is not the right answer, but at this point in time, it is not feasible in distributive education. There is just not enough trained black manpower available to do the job. This will leave the job to teachers like yourself who have not been prepared to teach disadvantaged youth, whether they be disadvantaged through culture, color, or academic limitations.

You each have a role to play in teaching disadvantaged. You need now to seek out that role, more adequately prepare yourself to take on the task, and get on with doing the job.

A year of research has led us to some hunches as to what kind of a teacher is thought to be a successful teacher when functioning in an inner-city school. I would like to make some of these statements and

practices available to you for whatever they are worth. Perhaps you may want to do a self-evaluation on the Teacher Practices Form or have your principal or department head do an evaluation on you with the Teacher Characteristics Form, or, better yet, have your students evaluate you with the Student Evaluation. But no matter what use you make of the materials, at least read the statements and teaching practices and see where you stand in the task of bringing about a humanization of our inner-city schools.



## IDENTIFYING AND COUNSELING DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS FOR DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION

Marjorie Peirce

Vocational educators who have taught quite a few years in city schools have watched a gradual change in the type of student who is interested in their program. A few lament the fact that "applicants aren't what they used to be." Some have been reluctant to include less able and slower learners in their regular programs. Others have warned against vocational education becoming the "dumping ground" for those who cannot succeed academically. Fortunately, many have accepted the challenge and are trying to approach the situation with "trial and error" methods but always in a positive manner.

In preparing for my topic of identifying and counseling disadvantaged students for distributive education, I have spent some time thinking through my activities and experience. I have tried to pin down concrete ideas which I believe should bring some degree of success.

According to the Michigan Guide for Administration of Vocational-Technical Education Programs, disadvantaged students may be identified as coming from families characterized as having academic, socio-economic, cultural, and other handicaps to prevent them from succeeding in Vocational Education programs. This general statement sets up thoughts for consideration. However, more specifically, Barbara Kemp, the United States Office of Education Specialist for Persons with Special Needs, defines the disadvantaged youth as those youngsters who have:

- (a) low level ability
- (b) limited formal vocabulary and poor speech construction
- (c) a relative slowness in performing intellectual tasks
- (d) poor health and poor health habits
- (e) an anti-intellectual attitude
- (f) an indifference to responsibility
- (g) non-purposeful activity, much of which is descriptive
- (h) limited experience of the sorts schools assume most of their students have had with their families; for instance, contact with social, cultural, and governmental institutions

- (i) a failure syndrome resulting from apathy and lack of self-confidence.<sup>1</sup>

I prefer this breakdown which clearly points out problem areas. Since not all students will have all problems, I would like to make just a few comments on what you may consider in an appraisal.

Low level ability is usually identified by poor test results or marks in academic subjects. There may be a lack of native intelligence, but frequently one finds that poor marks can easily result from one or several of the other factors listed, such as limited vocabulary, etc.

Poor speech construction is difficult to overcome. Frequently students recognize mistakes in others because they have had some formal training; but because they speak as their peer group outside of the classroom, they do not hear themselves until an opportunity is provided for them to do so.

I believe indifference to responsibility and slowness in performing intellectual tasks as well as lack of experience are related. Help in any of these areas can result in noticeable improvement in others.

Failure from lack of self-confidence and the resulting apathy toward becoming involved in classroom or school activities are most pathetic because this is a vicious circle which is hard to break. The "feeling of success" may be provided on a very small scale, but that beginning can be the important stepping-stone toward higher self-esteem.

Health problems may be basic to those already mentioned. They can also be related to appearance such as poor teeth, overweight, and personal grooming. It is not unusual for youngsters to arrive at the twelfth grade without ever having anyone really concerned in regard to any of these handicaps. Although educators like to feel high school students have vocations somewhat in mind, this is not always true. Choosing distributive education may merely be a method to earn money. They sometimes are outspoken as to what they feel they are worth. Urban children are "wage oriented" as the result of parents employed in highly unionized factory positions. An understanding of this will ease animosity which can build up when students have few qualifications but expect exceptional remuneration.

Some of the problems of the disadvantaged may need personal counseling from time to time. This form is also important for job placement and job ratings. Most of my counseling is done through classroom and club activities. You will find examples as we go along.

My procedure for selection is to present the distributive education program to all business education students in the tenth grade. Enrollment

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<sup>1</sup>Barbara Kemp, The Youth We Haven't Served, (Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1966), p. 6.

in the eleventh grade D.E. preparatory classes is built up through student requests resulting from these meetings or counselor recommendations. This latter group may include students who have shown positive interest in the course, students who have failed in another curriculum and/or vocational program such as secretarial or those who take the home economics curriculum and want to broaden their education in foods and clothing. In addition to these, it is not unusual for me to consider taking an occasional financial hardship case or provide a "last resort job" for a potential school dropout. This wide source does provide balance in types of students who make up the D.E. classes.

I do place some eleventh graders in the cooperative work experience program; however, I find it more beneficial to wait until the twelfth grade. There are definite advantages in recruiting co-ops from the D.E. preparatory classes because oftentimes students have begun to improve in problem areas. We might list a few examples:

1. They have practiced job interviews so they know what is expected from individuals to succeed in getting a position.
2. Planned assignments on fashion or retail store history, etc., which require research and a special format along with definite deadlines give experience and create a sense of pride in one's work.
3. Student sales talks and demonstrations instill the feeling of self-confidence.
4. Group reports and activities which require individuals to visit stores for information develop a sense of responsibility. They soon learn the importance of each person's contribution.

Actually, methods of selecting recruits for D.E. co-op are not much different than rules set up twenty years ago except one must weigh them in a different manner. Prospects have previously been considered on the basis of personal history, interest items, inherent capacity to learn, follow directions, solve problems and, finally, basic skills in mathematics, spelling, vocabulary, etc. One can see these categories are still important to know in regard to each applicant, but disadvantaged students may excel in one or two areas and some may be below acceptability in most.

I always use an application to get some background information. This covers personal data, job experience, if any, (babysitting and paper routes can indicate responsibility), required courses needed for graduation (this helps to determine whether there is time for work), parent's signature of approval, and counselor approval. The counselor is the last to see the application so he may include test scores, attendance, tardiness, course failures, and any other important comments. I do not ask for recommendations from other teachers because they can sometimes distort my appraisal of the recruit which may result in unfair bias in job placement.



It is desirable to have at least two interviews with applicants after seeing their applications. I first explain the program, point out specifically what is expected in the way of behavior, classwork, club activities, job responsibilities, and make candid remarks regarding problems which could cause failure. An outline is provided which briefly includes this information and is to be taken home for a parent or guardian to read and sign along with the student and return to me. My telephone number is included for anyone to call regarding questions or to arrange for a conference.

At the second interview I clear up any questions and then present job opportunities I believe the student could handle. This means I have carefully determined whether the student has needed qualifications or whether the store will be understanding and willing to accept him as he is. Wages offered by the store are discussed as well as daily hours and dress regulations, if any. I try to give the student a choice of employers for an interview. I ask that he be honest and not accept a position unless he is completely satisfied because he is expected to stay on a job the entire school year. Once an interview appointment is made, the student receives a fact sheet which welcomes him to the program. It lists important things to be taken to the interview and makes suggestions as to how to dress. You may notice there is considerable repetition throughout this phase. This is done basically to re-emphasize correct behavior and attitudes. It is wise to present the information with a preface such as "of course you already know you are expected" or "I know you are planning to take, etc.", so as not to talk down to the individual. I find a positive reaction to this approach which seems to indicate applicants are pleased that someone has confidence in them. Complete honesty on the part of the coordinator during job placement is also important in setting up a mutual feeling of respect and trust.

Dr. Benjamin Whitten, Area Superintendent of Vocational Education, Baltimore City Public Schools, has said:

"Inner-city children, like other human beings, react most favorably when they are accepted and valued as persons. Acceptance, respect, understanding, compassion and empathy are prerequisites for success in inner-city schools."

Dr. Whitten's statement has been proven to me time and time again. Here are some general suggestions as to how one may attain successful results:

1. Set your standards for classroom and work experience on a fairly high level. Youngsters will complain, some won't keep up, but they all need to learn about "quality" achievement to appreciate it.
2. Be consistent at all times. Expect the same performance from all. In fact, use the approach that students all "know" what is expected and should not have to be told. They tend to be more responsive.

3. Be fair and give equal time to each student in class participation. Do not allow the smart students to dominate. Refer to statements made by poorer students whenever possible such as "Let's go back to Barbara's comment about keeping stock." This helps build respect for the individual and develops a feeling of equality. It will encourage more students to participate in class discussion.
4. Admit to making mistakes. Correct them for students' benefit without making an excuse. They then realize that all human beings have some failings. An appreciation for honesty on the part of students helps to eliminate their fabrications in school and on the job and enables them to face the consequences for their own actions.
5. Laugh at yourself as well as laugh with your students. A teacher does not have to be "one of the gang" to have fun with young people. They do respond to a sense of humor and seldom show a lack of respect.
6. Control class discussions on job problems. They can easily become "gripe sessions." Students must learn to realize that not all things will be to their liking and that they must stand on their feet and be able to take it. Do, however, encourage them to speak up if situations are unjust and then only to the proper authority.
7. Review job ratings regularly. Let the individual hear good and bad comments. Be completely honest with the youngster who has a chip on his shoulder.
8. Provide opportunities through club activities for gaining self-confidence. Give training in parliamentary procedure and basic social formalities. Guide students in handling most of the club activities themselves.
9. Make sure the student feels free to talk with you in private whenever necessary. Those who feel inferior may hesitate to come and must be reassured by your display of sympathy to others and never being "too busy" to listen.
10. Be aware of things to compliment students. This can be done in reference to clothing, personal grooming, or an especially well-done assignment. If possible, keep administrators informed of successful accomplishments so students may receive recognition from supervisory personnel.

This past year I had a class of forty co-op students. I asked to keep the large number together so they might graduate as a group. About half were black, the others were Mexican, Polish, American Indian, and third generation Americans of Irish, French, German and Scotch backgrounds. This wonderful variety created one of the most interesting classes I have ever experienced.

The scholastic abilities were varied as you might guess. Some had been in D.E. as many as four semesters and none less than two. The greatest social growth was accomplished by the average to below-average student. They really were class leaders in club activities. The smarter students were not as outgoing but were willing to contribute ideas. They seemed to develop in finding direction for their own futures. Probably the most satisfying outcome was that everyone had a plan for after graduation either to attend a university, a community college, or to work at their job.

I took a survey of the class in regard to what each felt he had gained outside of textbook material. Out of twenty-two responses, the following results were mentioned. I have listed them in order with the most frequent at the beginning:

1. Learned to get along with all kinds of people
2. Developed self-confidence
3. Gained valuable experience
4. Learned to be responsible
5. Learned to converse with people
6. Felt secure about the future
7. Overcame inferior feelings
8. Learned to be loyal
9. Learned to save money
10. Improved attitudes toward life

Two actually said they enjoyed the course. I feel these results would make this comment unnecessary.



## COMMITMENT OF A SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

Lee D. Smith

At the outset, I must be candid and frank and say to you that I am not an expert in the field of urban social problems and, therefore, recognize my own limitations in projecting solutions to the problems we face in our urban communities. I consider myself an exploring practitioner--one who cares!

I must confess, however, that I do know that the problem is real; and the longer I have been involved, the more massive and complex the problems have appeared. This feeling has developed within me a deep conviction that the urban slum ghetto is the most difficult and serious problem ever to confront our cities and our nation. In my opinion, our very survival is dependent upon its solution--and the question is, will we have the time required?

I have felt that one of the most encouraging signs on the horizon which might accelerate our efforts came forth in January, 1968, when President Johnson invited the business community to become full partners with government in seeking solutions to the economic development of our urban communities and minority group peoples through the JOBS Program. Prior to that time, every program, whether in employment and training, education, or housing, was really totally government-conceived and politically administered--built in for failure, with waste, distrust for the program, and despair for the recipients of the services. To the disadvantaged person in the ghetto, business may be the last remaining credible institution. The institutions of government, education, and church have been rejected by the people by the failure of these institutions to produce meaningful solutions to the problem of developing personal dignity and self-respect for the person.

When one looks critically at the urban problem, it seems to me that there are certain basic assumptions which emerge. First, the plight of the urban black poor is quite unlike that of any other group that has made its way on to our economic escalator. This group of poor people is black; and, in a society filled with hostility toward people of color, this presents a continuing problem in their drive for upward mobility. Whether we like it or not, we have to face the fact that there has been and is a system of racism in America which makes this problem more than a personal individual problem. It is a problem of a business, too. Its solution necessitates a corporate or collective commitment, as well as individual initiative, if the system is to be destroyed--and hope become a realization!

Second, the problem is not one of just being poor. Blacks are confronted with inner-personal problems, resulting from a life of denial and discriminatory practices. This brings a sense of hopelessness and destructive self-image.

I label this as the "People Problem." Any program which does not deal with the people problem is doomed to failure. You can educate me, you can provide me housing; but, if you don't give me a job so that I can provide for the needs of my family and me, the people problem is not realistically faced, nor is there any solution that can be really meaningful. That is not to say that we ignore the need for education, housing, health care, and other basic needs; but, rather, that we make sure that every person has not only the right, but the opportunity to apply his abilities to the maximum of his potential capacity, and to his own benefit.

Now, let's get down to the "guts" of what I was asked to talk with you about--"Securing Employer Commitment," or I like to call it, "Making A Commitment of a Social Conscience," or "Preparing Management!"

Well-conceived programs for employing the disadvantaged involve many changes in company procedure and thinking at all levels of management.

The commitment of the chief executive (the President) is critically important to success. My company (The Jewel Food Stores) made such a commitment four years ago--two years before the President's JOBS Program. However, you must have more than corporate commitment. You must have complete top management involvement. By this I mean that you must get the top management team to communicate to all levels of supervision that the corporate commitment is made and expected to be fully implemented, not just because it's morally right, but because it's good business as well.

It is not enough for the president just to go to his personnel man and tell him to do it--to hire and train the disadvantaged. He must recognize what he is asking the personnel man to do. For years, the personnel manager has been fighting off the label of "Company Welfare Man." One of the ways by which he has built confidence in his professional competence with the operating people was through his ability to recruit and select good people for the company. Now, he is told that he must hire the "hard core." The people who do the selecting must put aside all the selection standards which they spent years to develop because these will screen out the hard core. That's what they were designed to do, obviously. But this is not the way personnel people usually function. Operating managers will now ask, "What are you sending me?", and the personnel man will have to be prepared to answer.

The supervisor sees himself faced with a difficult situation. He is asked to employ hard core people and still be responsible for costs, productivity, and work quality. Management's response to this problem is--or should be--and, in our case, was:

- We limited to one or two the number of disadvantaged trainees under any department manager within a store.
- We provided the assistance of a counselor or coach to help assimilate the trainee from his living environment to his new work situation.

- We trained supervisors in the special skills needed to understand, supervise and, in turn, train the disadvantaged person in the skills necessary to perform the work activity.
- We let the manager know that we (top management) had complete confidence in his ability to do a good job in this special effort. This is reassuring to him.

Of course, a major obstacle to program implementation and success is lack of understanding of the depth of differences in white, middle-class society and the culture of the deprived minorities. Let's face it, even sympathetic and committed people can have some pretty weird ideas and attitudes about "the disadvantaged." Deep down, as we listen and as we hear--"the hard core are stupid, lazy, and immoral." Therefore, it is with much satisfaction when we find examples that show, with a little attention to their needs, trainees turn out to be good workers, possessed of native, if unschooled intelligence. It takes some time and experience to recognize that while we all are Americans--black and white--in our programs, we are dealing substantially with cross-cultural problems and racial discrimination and their combined effects on motivation. We see around us operating managers who alienate and lose trainees without knowing why, and others of us who raise imaginary problems and miss the real ones.

The primary techniques used by many companies to avoid problems like these are designed to build effective feedback into the organized effort. Counselors, instructors, and supervisors are encouraged to develop communication and a trust level with the trainees. Effective communication is also a key element between the people running the program and top management. A well-designed control system not only measures program success and suggests improvements, but also educates management in an unfamiliar and new field of endeavor.

Without being condescending, we must recognize that many new workers, regardless of color or family background, are under tremendous pressures, real and imagined, in a new work situation. Often they are strangers in a strange environment--this is particularly true of the black worker who finds himself among an all-white staff in an all-white neighborhood, unaware of the significance of the spoken and unspoken expectations of his supervisor and his co-workers regarding work behavior, promptness in starting time, absenteeism, etc. From the traditional manager's viewpoint, some are just overly sensitive to supervisory authority and prone to distort what was intended as helpful criticism into hostile attitudes.

We need to commit ourselves as responsible corporate citizens, that we will give enterprising members of minority groups the same chance to succeed or fail at the American Dream of economic freedom as anyone else; and they should face no more risks than those encountered by any other members of our society.

This also means that our educational institutions must also be more responsive to the individual's needs for educational preparation and



development. In looking over your seminar agenda, the subjects being discussed, and the fact that you are supportive of Vocational Distributive Education Programs, I know we share many mutual concerns. I am particularly intrigued by the label given to your first session tomorrow afternoon-- "More Learning/Less Teaching." I, personally, subscribe to what that title would seem to say.

We, in Jewel, are currently working with a very interesting educational concept being developed within Malcolm X College by its President, Dr. Charles Hurst. Malcolm X is a two-year community college in the Chicago Junior College system. It is essentially all black, located in the heart of the West Side Ghetto. Dr. Hurst is developing a dual system curriculum to serve the needs of the community--one, college preparatory; the other, vocational preparation.

It is unique in that the college is open to all comers--there are to be no failures--successes will be measured in terms of achievement--the old grading methodology is abandoned. He is accepting the responsibility for the student's success through learning. He identifies the college as a learning center with intensive tutoring.

It is my conviction that to fully achieve responsible economic freedom for all peoples, we must extend our partnership involvement to include three of our primary institutions--Business, Education, and Government (not to the exclusion of home and church)--individually, we are ineffective.

We will only measure our success in this effort when we accept our responsibility and commit our organizations to preparing the disadvantaged person and give him the opportunity to compete and succeed in the mainstream economy.

In closing, let me just review briefly the accomplishments of our company in the employment and training of the disadvantaged. The results are meaningful only to the extent it is evidence that progress can be made--not without trials, tribulations, and many disappointments--but not discouragement. With total commitment with a purpose, there is hope and encouragement.

Five years ago, we had less than two per cent full-time blacks in our employment. Today we have ten per cent.

In reviewing our progress on this program, there appear to be several critical factors that I feel have "made the difference" for us:

- Top management and middle management have supported the program and its objectives--"It was the right thing to do, and we were right in doing it."
- Our total objective of hiring the disadvantaged has been broken down into specific goals by store, by division, with the operating managers. They set their own goals; but once the goals were agreed upon, we measure progress against them on a monthly basis.

- Regular reports are made to the operating and division managers on our progress and problems, and periodic dialogs are held so all of us can work at solving the problems that prevent us from staying on target.
- We have developed interviewers that are experienced in employing the disadvantaged. They are located in an employment office in the ghetto area.
- We have hired tough-minded, sensitive, results-orientated black Coaches, and hold them accountable for their trainees.

Yes, and sometimes when the going gets rough, we ask ourselves, is it worth it? Let me try to answer this by quoting from a report by one of our Coaches on a trainee:

"Jim Black - Employed 11 weeks - Absent 19 days.

How do we measure success? Well, in the last report, you'll remember that the issue was how we were going to get Jim to work on a regular basis. Now, however, we are dealing with a young man who has matter-of-factly accepted the pattern of the work world; and, in addition, he now wants to know how his schedule can be adjusted to allow him to return to school on a part-time basis. This is not to say that he presents no problems at all. However, I think that we must understand that we are now dealing with a different individual. In my mind, we have come a long way, but still there is much farther to go. Jim is not content with merely putting cans on the shelf. He wants to move from the routine of the night crew to day time and greater responsibility."

These kinds of improvements in some of the individuals that we are working with provide us with the encouragement and stimulation to continue in our efforts to employ the disadvantaged in spite of the difficulties. We hope it may provide other organizations with the same encouragement.

DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION SUBJECT MATTER  
AND THE DISADVANTAGED

James G. Bennett, Jr.

Milton Larson (1970) in the Center Publication Review and Synthesis of Research on Curriculum Development in Vocational Education states:

Curriculum development based on employment needs is the essence of effective payroll education for the youth and adult in today's world.

Curriculum Development in Vocational Education

The real thrust of curriculum building for vocational instruction has been centered around analyses of occupations. Interpretation of the employer's needs of today for tomorrow's program of vocational education to meet future job requirements is complex--but necessary in today's changing technological civilization.

Curriculum builders in vocational and technical education are looking with renewed emphasis to job analysis and task analysis. The literature reflects this. Gray (1967) pointed out that course content in home economics gainful employment is determined by job analysis of what the worker must know and be able to do to be successful in the occupation for which he is trained.

In the field of agriculture, Drawbaugh (1966) emphasized that of the several means of obtaining occupational training information--job analysis is one of the best known. The Department of Labor's Training and Reference Manual for Job Analysis (1965) states that job analysis is the process of identifying by observation, interview, and study the technical and environmental facts of a specific job and reporting the significant worker's activities and requirements.

The importance of providing meaningful curriculums for vocational education at the high school level based upon the facts of employment requirements was presented in a comprehensive study by Beima (1967) for the Division of Vocational Education, State Department of Education for Alaska.

Curriculum Development  
in Vocational Distributive Education

The task analysis technique has been employed by researchers in vocational distributive education. An excellent job of characterizing



task analysis has been done by Chenzoff (1965) in his book, Guidelines for Training Situation Analysis. Task analysis is a method or process by which a task is examined and, in terms of certain attributes, its characteristics are identified. A task analysis determines the knowledge and skill requirements of the job. Butler (1967) states that a systematic study of the behavioral requirements of the tasks is needed to determine the knowledge and skill content of each task.

According to Butler, a task description is usually developed in three stages. First, the duties of each job are outlined; second, the task for each of the duties are listed; and third, the task analysis identifies standards of performance.

The occupational task approach to curriculum development in distributive education has been given renewed interest. Ertel (1966) designed a study to develop a research instrument to identify the major tasks and associated knowledges necessary for successful employment in the merchandising operations of department stores, limited price variety stores, and general merchandise stores. Included in the study were both supervisory and non-supervisory personnel. He categorized tasks under the following captions: 1) selling; 2) keeping and counting stock; 3) operating check-stand and register; 4) receiving, checking, and marking merchandise; 5) delivery; 6) keeping accounts and records; 7) computing information by using mathematical skills; 8) planning and arranging interior and window displays; 9) planning, preparing, and placing advertisements; 10) buying merchandise for resale; 11) pricing merchandise; and 12) controlling stock. There were 332 tasks listed under these 12 categories.

Some of Ertel's conclusions were that discrepancies existed in the type of work actually done and the content of some high school distributive education programs in the state of Washington. Another conclusion was that tasks involving technical aspects of planning, preparing, and placing advertisements and most display activities are performed by a limited number of in-store or commercial specialists. A third conclusion was that in high school programs aimed at preparing youth for entry positions in merchandising divisions, the major emphasis should be on developing, selling, stock keeping, and cashiering competencies. He stressed that human relations competence was an inherent element of these tasks.

Crawford (1968) in her monumental research project--A Competency Pattern Approach to Curriculum Construction in Distributive Teacher Education--categorized tasks along with the jobs in which these tasks were performed according to major subject matter competency areas. The critical tasks performed by workers in selected jobs were identified through structured interviews with the employee whose job was being studied and with the supervisor of the employee in the job.

The subject matter competency areas they identified were: 1) advertising; 2) communications; 3) display; 4) human relations; 5) mathematics; 6) merchandising; 7) operations and management; 8) product and

service technology; and 9) selling. These competency areas have corresponding sets of knowledges and understandings, skills, and attitudes. Crawford's work has been described as being highly significant to the field of distributive education, and her study has already made important contributions to curriculum development at all educational levels.

Peck and Denman (1968) in their national study--Relative Importance and Preparation for Distributive Education Subject Areas--surveyed 250 employers and employees in the following categories: retail, wholesale, and service trades; transportation, public utilities, and finance; and insurance and real estate.

Participants were asked to list important and unimportant subject areas. The important subject areas included: job knowledge; human relations and personal characteristics; communications; mathematics; and internal organization relationships and planning. These subject areas were as important in large firms as well as in small firms.

There are a number of other studies that we could review that set forth the subject matter competency areas of distributive occupations. The literature in this area is growing. When you examine the research I have eluded, you readily see the relative agreement concerning distributive education subject matter. For our purposes here, I want to now pose the following question: How relevant are the competency areas I have cited and the corresponding subject matter content to the occupational needs of disadvantaged youth? Before I attempt to answer the question, let's look at some of the research that has been done in the area of student perceptions toward the world of work.

#### Perceptions of Youth Toward the World of Work

The amount of research conducted on the perceptions of youth toward the world of work is small but growing. Two major research thrusts can be identified. One type refers to the attitudes and aspirations of students toward work. The other relates to the perceptions of youth toward work. Let us examine a number of studies within each area.

##### Attitudes and Aspirations

Connors (1965) compared the occupational interest of Negro and white adolescent boys living in the greater Washington, D. C., areas. The following conclusions were reported:

In terms of social prestige, the jobs Negro subjects aspire to (vocational aspirations), and actually expect to have (vocational expectation), do not differ significantly from those which white boys desire and expect. The discrepancy between aspiration and expectation is not any larger for Negroes than it is for whites.

Judges rated the realism of the boys' job expectations and found the Negroes to be significantly less realistic than comparable white boys. Realism was defined as the choices boys made that were in accord with their measured interests, their parental educational and socio-economic status, their intelligence, their opportunities for employment in the local area, and their educational plans. Connors concluded that the degree of a boy's realism is dependent upon the degree to which he knows himself and the world of work.

A study of Garbin and Campbell (1967) surveyed 69 vocational educators to gain insight into the attitudes, values, behavioral patterns, and problems of youth in their adjustment to the world of work. Their report stated that approximately one-half of the vocational educators surveyed felt that a large number of youths have unrealistic aspirations and expectations as to the requirements and rewards of their initial jobs. Poor attitudes toward work and working, lack of responsibility, maturity, and self-discipline, and lack of knowledge of the real demands of the work were each reported by more than 40% of the respondents to be the attitudinal and behavioral manifestations which typify youths who experience difficulty in adjusting to work. The specific problem of lack of responsibility, maturity, and self-discipline was also rated the most important obstacle faced by youth in the transition from school to work.

The authors reasoned that many of these attitudes and behavior patterns exist because youths have not had the opportunity to learn and inculcate the values which are requisites for occupational adjustment. Learning new roles and expectations requires practice and orientation to the new before replacement of the old can occur. The problem is that many educational programs are void of provisions that enable youth to practice or to assimilate those qualities that enhance their status in the work complex.

### Perceptions

Three major studies have been conducted relating to the perceptions of youth toward work. The basic designs of each of the three studies were similar. That is, each referred to perceptions of youth toward work, each involved the development and utilization of an instrument called a perception scale. The scale was administered to students and workers, and each treated the collected data statistically.

Perception was defined as: the composite understanding students possess toward working within specified occupations. The awareness of objects and events within the specified occupation comes about via the senses and is transmitted into a mental image, which combines with previous experience to form a concept of work and the role a person might play in the specific occupation.

Masterason (1968) studied the perceptions of disadvantaged rural high school girls toward office work. A significant difference was



reported when the perceptions of disadvantaged rural high school girls was compared to the perceptions of office workers. Dye (1968) examined the office work perceptions of tenth grade female students in eight urban cities. He came up with a "mixed bag" of results. That is, when he compared the students' perceptions of office work with the perceptions of office workers, he found statistically significant differences in four cities (Birmingham, Detroit, New York, and Pittsburgh) and not in others (Boston, Columbus, Fort Worth, and Oakland). He attributed the mixed results to sets of unique characteristics of youth existing in each of the cities.

The one study in vocational distributive education was conducted by your speaker (Bennett, 1969). It examined the perceptions of tenth grade urban high school students in three Ohio cities toward work within general merchandise retail department stores. The study included four groups of participants, three student groups, and one department store worker group. One student category consisted of 350 black tenth graders enrolled in inner-city high schools. It is this group that will be reported on here because their perceptions were the least compatible and the most statistically different from the department store workers.

The black inner-city students' perceptions of work within general merchandise retail department stores differed significantly from those of department store workers (black and white) on each of the five major categories contained in the perception instrument. They were termed misperceptions because they differed significantly from the perceptions of workers employed in retail department store work. Let us turn to an analysis of those categories and the misperceptions.

#### Initial Employment Job Prerequisites

Students evidenced the following misperceptions pertaining to job prerequisites:

- An underestimate of the manual dexterity required to successfully perform many of the job duties of department store operations.
- Inaccuracies regarding the amount of pre-employment training required to qualify for department store basic entry-level jobs.
- Misperceptions of the dress essentials or dress codes subscribed to by department store employers.
- An underestimate of the personality requisites basic to dealing with fellow employees and customers.

### Job Rewards

The student misperceptions in this category were:

- A rejection of the concept of starting at an entry-level position and working one's way up the ladder of success.
- An over-emphasis on beginning salaries.
- Belief that many entry-level department store occupations are dead-end jobs.
- A poor understanding of the importance of retailing to the overall economy of the United States.

### Job Expectations

The student misperceptions in this category were:

- They were not cognizant of the importance of such company rules as being on time for work.
- Students felt department store employees worked fewer hours than others in business and industry.
- They did not perceive that retail sales people are subjected to customer criticism.
- Students did not view retail sales work as providing job growth opportunities.
- They perceived that retail sales workers were exempt from routine job tasks.
- They placed less importance in serving customers quickly and accurately.

### General Department Store Working Conditions

The student misperceptions in this category were:

- Students perceived that retail sales jobs were threatened by automatic vending machines.
- They viewed stealing from retail employers to be a "minor" crime.

- They rejected the notion that working in a retail department store was a good first job.
- Students perceived department store work as cyclical and subject to less steady employment than factory workers.

#### Discrimination

The misperceptions of students in this category were:

- They believed that black students do not have equal opportunity of being hired as department store workers.
- Students perceived black department store workers as being promoted less often than white department store workers.

Now let us return to the question I posed earlier. "How relevant are the competency areas as identified by distributive education researchers?" The broad subject matter competencies are basically relevant with one exception--the economics of the retail industry is short-changed. In fact, it's not mentioned as a major subject matter competency area in the research we have reviewed. Now if students don't see the economic contribution of the retail industry to the overall economy in terms of potential jobs and job growth, steady employment, community benefit, good working conditions, etc., then they will turn off to the industry.

As far as the subject matter content which is based on the competency areas is concerned, we must re-order and strengthen the subject matter content to get at the misperceptions of youth. We have got to design experiences in our project-method classes to wipe out these misperceptions. The project method offers us a beautiful opportunity to do this. Specific behavioral outcomes should be developed based on the misperception reports. Co-op programs may also be improved by the same process.

Specify the behavioral outcomes of the various experiences we set for our students in the training plan--we do too little of this. More significantly, many teachers fail to determine via formal evaluation whether the behavioral objectives were ever reached. Thus, the intent of the process is lost.

There is one other element in improving subject matter that we have overlooked. We have left out the student. When I examined Lucy Crawford's research, I noted this void. As far as I know, the curricular models for vocational-technical teacher education--which will be presented at the National Conference this November--hint at this but does not specifically state that the teacher involves students in the evaluation and development of subject matter.



I'm calling for increased student involvement in developing curriculum. We know what the employers want. We have to determine where the students are and dedicate ourselves to helping them grasp the distributive education subject matter. We must bridge the gap between student perceptions and employer needs. We must stop talking at students and begin talking with them--on curriculum.

This research further illustrates the misperceptions of youth toward the world of work. What are the outcomes of such perceptions? The poor work perceptions of black, inner-city youth are a contributing factor to their low enrollments in vocational distributive education programs. If they hold poor perceptions toward work within general merchandise department stores, it seems obvious they will not seek training for department store work. Students who possess the misconceptions that have been presented, that manage to become employed in a department store will--because of their poor perceptions toward the specialized work--misinterpret their work roles, become frustrated and wind up unemployed.

Several researchers have pointed this out. Peterburs (1967) attempted to determine the characteristics, traits, and behaviors of retail sales persons that were most important in judging job satisfactoriness. He sampled 59 retail employers in the Minneapolis metropolitan area and concluded that retail sales persons were discharged mainly due to poor attitudes toward work, and retail sales persons were promoted primarily because of a positive attitude toward their jobs. In another study, Rurey (1966) found that the most important traits for beginning sales persons were accuracy, initiative, attendance, and dependability. Major deficiencies were in the areas of poor attitudes, lack of dependability, and lack of concentration.

Miller (1969) identified the effective and ineffective critical behaviors of the disadvantaged employed in entry-level retail jobs. He used the critical incident research technique to obtain critical incident reports from immediate supervisors directly involved with the activities of the disadvantaged participating in the JOBS (Jobs Opportunities in the Business Sector) Program of the National Alliance of Businessmen. He reported that 77 per cent of the critical behaviors identified concerned human relations with customers or fellow associates and attitudes toward the job, while only 23 per cent of the critical behaviors concerned skills, knowledges, or procedures. The specific ineffective behaviors of the JOBS participants were:

The ineffective distributive worker:

1. does not approach customers whom he feels will not make a purchase;
2. is resentful of customers' opinions;
3. discusses personal problems on the job;
4. fails to communicate with other associates;

5. will not accept criticism of his work;
6. does not report to work and does not call in;
7. resigns from his job without notice;
8. lets his outside activities and personal life interfere with his work situation;
9. needs continuous supervision to attain minimum work performance;
10. carries on lengthy conversations with friends while on the job;
11. feels that the supervisor discriminates against him;
12. shows a negative attitude and no enthusiasm toward the job;
13. must be shown repeatedly how to complete an operation and has difficulty transferring training from one situation to another;
14. is unfamiliar with sales procedures.

I stated earlier that misperceptions toward an occupation may result in a person's not seeking training for or employment in that occupation. It may also result in his leaving that occupation.

The situation may be similar in other vocational areas. Victor Riesel, the nationally syndicated columnist, recently reported on the failure of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades department to retain young minority youngsters who had been recruited over the past few years.

According to Riesel, the union interested a total of approximately 40,000 young men who were mostly black. Of that amount, 35,000 have dropped out. Only one in ten entered the construction trades despite the lure of \$6 to \$9 an hour job.

Riesel goes on to say that there is probably no single answer to why the profound drop-out rate. It may be that the young men just don't believe that the unions mean it, or it may be that they never had a chance to qualify themselves, or it may be that the mothers and fathers wanted a stethoscope and scalpel or a legal brief in the hands of their children instead of a trowel, drill, or hammer. I'd add one other possibility-- a credibility gap, between the perceptions of youth toward the trade occupations and the way it is on the job in a trade.

What can we do to portray vocational occupations in a more realistic light?

We can begin the task of vocationally educating our youth as early as the primary grades. What I am advocating here is a reorientation toward the worth of all work and a gradual long haul exposure to occupations. This was one of my basic recommendations as a result of my study.

This concept is receiving more and more attention by businessmen and industrial leaders, guidance and counseling personnel, and concerned educators. Within the last two months I have heard this concept put forth at the City University of New York Cooperative Education Conference and the New Jersey Council of Vocational Education's annual public meeting.

At the CCNY conference, Dr. Theodore Cote (1970) the Chairman of the Department of Industrial Education at Temple University, reported some results of a recent survey he conducted of guidance counselors regarding vocational education. One of the questions and alternate answers he posed that supported this concept was as follows:

The school's responsibility for assisting youth in learning about occupations can best be discharged by expecting:

1. appropriate teachers to include information in classwork;
2. all teachers to include occupational information in classwork;
3. guidance counselors to cover this in their normal counseling;
4. guidance counselors to organize specific programs;
5. the school has no such responsibility.

The results saw the guidance counselors selecting the following:

- |                                                                           |            |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 1. guidance departments to organize special programs;                     | 36%        |
| 2. all teachers to include occupational information in classwork;         | 25%        |
| 3. appropriate teachers to include occupational information in classwork. | <u>29%</u> |
|                                                                           | 90%        |

This is an encouraging sign. Counselors are beginning to perceive the importance of vocational exploration and development for all youth. In addition to the above, Cote reports that the guidance counselors who were surveyed believed that such programs ought to be offered to students beginning as early as age six.



In New Jersey we have begun to move toward earlier exploratory experiences in vocational education in several ways:

- A. Technology for Children Program. This project involves 114 teachers, 66 schools, and 49 districts. One of its principal objectives is to "develop a vocational awareness of the vast range of job possibilities that exist in the real world of work."
- B. Introduction to Vocations Program. This program begins as early as the eighth grade. It surveys the broad categories of occupations, and they are correlated and re-enforced with field trips to those occupations.
- C. Work Experience Career Exploration Program (WECEP). This program affords ninth graders (many 14 and 15 year olds) an opportunity to participate in a cooperative education project. As part of their carefully planned school program, students work part-time at jobs in the area, explore vocational experiences with their teacher-coordinators, and attend regular academic classes. Thus far, the program appears to have a great deal of promise.

Other additional recommendations to improve the perceptions of youth toward the world of work are:

- Bring success stories into the classroom particularly of those who have graduated from inner-city schools and have gone on to vocational success.
- Promote a greater degree of cooperation between guidance counselors and vocational personnel.
- Become involved in vocational information programs in the elementary grades.
- Involve your community's employers in school programs. Sains (1970) reports that employers have learned that becoming involved in their schools gives them a decided advantage in competing for and attracting the kinds of employees they need to remain profitable.

Syngg and Combs (1949) explain the phenomena of the inability of people to cope with behavior standards that are apart from their usual environment as follows:

The individual's total understanding and perceptions are the determining cause of his behavior. His total field of understanding and perceptions is not abstract, artificial, or unreal. It is his everyday surroundings in which he lives and takes to be reality. . . no matter what he is told, his own understandings of reality will always seem real, substantial, and solid.

Samson (1962) explained the importance of student perceptions toward educational programs and occupational careers. He reasoned that "there is little doubt that today's adolescents are conscious of 'the right things.' They want to be taking the right courses and be working toward the right career. If a particular career does not meet the 'appropriate standard' of youth, it may be because the occupation has not managed to adequately describe itself," and the opportunities it represents.

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## NEW PERCEPTIONS FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

John Kushner

No subject has been more discussed in recent years and less understood than that of the disadvantaged student. I use the term disadvantaged perhaps because it is the most widely popular in federal research projects, in the schools both at the post-secondary and secondary levels, but many names could be applied to the same subject. To illustrate this point, let me quote from James Pfiefer, of Paul Syndicate when he explains the term, "I used to think I was poor, then they told me I wasn't poor, I was needy; then they told me it was self-defeating to think of myself as needy, but I was culturally deprived; then they told me deprived was a bad image, that I was underprivileged; then they told me underprivileged was over-used, and that I was disadvantaged. I still don't have a dime, but I do have a great vocabulary." While this statement may be amusing, as all of us think about it, it is quite true. We have changed names from the culturally disadvantaged, the culturally deprived, to just plain disadvantaged to every kind of term that seems to suit the purpose and yet not quite finding the right term.

For my purposes, the term that probably best describes the needs in education is the term used by the Gregg Division of McGraw-Hill in their publication, "Business Teacher." They describe students with special needs as the academically unsuccessful. I prefer this term because it best describes the total population of students that may have been neglected and that perhaps needs a new kind of education, a new kind of devotion, and new kind of emphasis by the business education teaching population. While disadvantaged is an excellent term, it tends to bring to mind the people that are largely of a minority group, and I believe the learning problems are not necessarily restricted to any one cultural group. True, the great majority of the learning problems that are encountered are encountered by minority groups, and this may be true for many reasons--perhaps due to long-term poverty, long-term neglect, and for several other reasons the Negro, the Puerto Rican, the white Appalachian have suffered; but I also believe that anything we can do to help out our academically unsuccessful students will carry forth to all students who need particular help whether he is black, white, Mexican, or any other particular cultural group. I hope that the things that I say today will be equally applicable to our low-achieving students who, because of their backgrounds or because of their motivational needs, have not been able to compete successfully in our schools. I do not mean to imply by this that they have not been able to compete satisfactorily in school because the schools have not attempted to do their jobs throughout the years, but because the knowledge and the backgrounds that they bring to school and their current home life makes it very difficult for these students to achieve.

We must recognize that no matter what we do in schools, we are educators. Ideally, we would love to teach students who exhibit the

capabilities of achieving high standards of performance; but what we must never forget is that we are teachers, and our goal is to impart knowledge necessary to fill the needs of our students whether they be vocational needs or personal needs. Perhaps we can get a better understanding of our role as teachers if we take a few minutes to examine exactly how students learn.

Just as we talk about the many different names applied to the academically unsuccessful, we can talk about many definitions of learning, but each one of you must identify internally how students learn and then gauge your whole process of education by your own definition. Let me give you the one that has helped guide some of my own teaching.

I believe learning is the change in behavior, whether observable or not, in the learner caused by his need to adapt to reach the goals that he perceives to be important. The important thing in this first part of my definition of learning is the word perceives. Remember it is important to think not how we as teachers perceive the situation, but how the learner perceives the situation. If we would go on and describe learning further, we might say it is the process that takes place when the individual realizes, and this is important, that his present behavior or knowledge changes to achieve a feeling of self-confidence. The individual will continue to operate at his current level until he finds it necessary to make changes. Above all, learning is a personal thing. It always takes the student from where he is to where he wants to go. If we can modify his perceptions of the total situation, when we talk of a certain skill or a certain task or a certain assignment, by making the student feel that it is necessary to gain vocational competence in order to be successful in his future life, making him more vocationally confident, he will listen. But until the time the student feels that the goals that we set for him are his goals, no learning will take place.

At this point you are probably wondering why should we, who have many capable students in our classes, be asked to spend so much effort in trying to encourage a student to be interested in the goals that we have set. We feel that he should come to school with these goals. Well, the answer lies partly in the assumption that:

Perhaps this has not been a goal of his home. He has not had any particular drive to learn any particular skills that we are trying to impart.

Then we also wonder why should we do the job that the elementary school teacher perhaps should have done?

I firmly believe that as teachers on the secondary level, we can't sit back and say someone else should have done the job; but rather should say--this is where the student is, our principal task is educating youth, that is what we get paid for, that is what people expect of us, that is what we are trained for. As a result, we must devote our attention to all students, particularly those who need our special help.



Teaching has undergone many, many changes over the years. There was a time when we were faced in our classrooms with only students who wanted to perform and had the push necessary from home. The students that couldn't succeed were not in school. But over the years with compulsory education and with the great efforts to keep students in school, we face a widely different population than teachers of a generation ago. We have done such a good job of truly selling people on education as the basis for any kind of success in life, and they have done everything to keep children in school. There is no doubt in my mind that, as a teacher, we must believe that there is hope for everyone in education or else we cannot walk into the classroom.

Let us suppose that the need for learning does exist within a child. Is this enough? No, the teacher is the most necessary and important element in the whole educative process. The teacher provides setting, tools, and the model necessary for the students' exploration. Even though the need for learning exists with the individual, unless there is opportunity for learning, there will be no progress. In other words, the learner must have a need to learn plus an opportunity for exploration and effort in order for learning to take place.

I hate to use the cliché, "Nothing succeeds like success," but it is as true today as it was when it was first created. The self is a very important concept in the process of learning. Activities that result in increased self-esteem will be repeated. Activities that result in failure are avoided. Many positive self-perceptions give the individual the feeling of adequacy and confidence. As a result, he approaches learning with an essentially positive direction. I believe this statement is probably easier to take than most of the statements that are available concerning learning. The one reason for this is evident, take a look at our own lives. Examine your own career for just a few seconds. Think about what you would like to do the most. More than likely these are the things you are most successful at. The more successful you have been in something, the more you have pursued it.

Oh, I know at this point that even though you were not successful at first, you kept trying. Why can't some of our students do this? The reason we keep trying is because we have been successful at some things. That fact gives us the courage and guts to go on and try other things and continue at it even though we have not been immediately successful. We can take the case of our academically unsuccessful student or disadvantaged student; he has not realized many successes to gauge his life upon. He may not have very many good models at home to base the premise of future success. All of his successes must come from us, at least at the start.

As mentioned earlier, we have been able to do a good job of selling people that education is the answer to all ills; and up to this time the people that we serve have bought our professional beliefs. But just as the world is rapidly changing, advanced conquest of the moon is imminent, technology is advancing so rapidly that everything we learn within ten years will be obsolete, it is also true that as we become more educated,

people are beginning to question education. They are beginning to ask questions. "What is wrong with our schools?" "Why can't we educate and interest our students?" I would prefer that educators look into these questions for either dismissal or solution. I know you have been told many, many times that if we don't do the job, someone else will; but I think we are reaching that impasse. The point is that if we don't, someone else will.

Now we know many of the criticisms of the schools could be cleared up with just a better understanding of what happens within the schools. On the other hand, I also know that unless we make some steps and take a good look at what we are doing, we are going to be in trouble in not too long of a time. I also believe that things will probably get a lot worse before they get better unless we act very speedily. It becomes apparent that if we are going to do the job that we are commissioned to do, that of educating the youth, we have to gear our needs to those students with special needs. Let me emphasize again, I do not mean that we have to gear our educative processes only to students with special needs, but we are going to have to take a bigger and more discerning look, as you will be during this workshop, at the special education problems that exist in working with our new generation and population.

I believe the great thing about your being in this workshop during this summer session is the fact that you are willing to take a look at some of the conditions that do exist because, unless you have viewed the problems with your own eyes and have lived a little bit of the life that students with special needs live each day, it would be impossible to have any kind of empathy or understanding of their particular problems. As teachers, we have no choice but to understand our students. No matter if they are good, bad, or indifferent, it is still our role to help them.

It is very important that we have some type of clear-cut definition to describe the behavior that these students bring to school. Monetarily we could say if we were talking strictly about financially disadvantaged students, that their parents' income is probably in the neighborhood of \$2,500. They come from homes where frequently parents communicate negative appraisals of the school establishment because of their own failures in coping with the school. They also have very low estimates even at the time of early elementary school of their ability to succeed. These same families know the value of education but dislike school. They typically have parents working at jobs which require little education and, as a result, have the impression that school is not particularly successful. They are very often geared to present as against future gratification. They perceive school as interfering with present gratification. Also, typically, the students may seem to be inarticulate and nonverbal except when speaking their own language. Some other descriptive items about the academically unsuccessful might include: they are unwilling to complete homework assignments, they have difficulty in taking tests, they are definitely convinced they can't learn, they are behavior problems in

school, families are generally unstable, have a short span of attention and, in general, are apathetic and indifferent to school as a whole.

Once we understand the conditions under which these particular students operate, then it is time to develop some particular answers to their particular problems. It is difficult to give all the answers to teachers that will be universally accepted in all locales. If anything has been discovered as a result of federal research, it is that one community cannot adopt totally a plan that has been successful in another community. They can perhaps adapt it to meet their local needs, but to try to adopt something completely that has worked in another community will probably result in failure.

There are many programs or possible solutions that could be employed to help change the perceptions of our students, particularly our academically unsuccessful students. To describe them would take a volume, but the examination of a few would be helpful at this point.

One way would be a course, perhaps, let us call it Occupational Orientation, where a student could be given a blow-by-blow description of the major high school areas that he might encounter and what the occupational opportunities are in these areas. For example, a student may spend two weeks in bookkeeping where he would actually be encountered by the bookkeeping terms. He would get the typical guidance information about job opportunities, necessary skills, do the typical homework that a bookkeeping student would have to do. Then he would spend another two weeks in a shorthand segment where he again would learn the beginning shorthand alphabet and see some of the types of homework that might be required of him and also again get the background on the possibilities of future employment in the stenographic area. A few more weeks on distributive education utilizing the same approach. We could do the same thing with data processing. In other words, take a one-semester course that would thoroughly expose students to what they would face in future high school courses and also what the opportunities in those areas are. In the few experimental courses that have been run in occupational orientation, there has been a definite self-direction and perception development toward particular business education subjects that aid both the school and the student in making occupational course choices.

A second expanding type of program that is beginning to exist in many of our schools is using business and industry as a source in the education of students with special needs. I know we have all used business and industry as a source of speakers, as a source of visitations, and as training stations; but we have never really involved business and industry in our educative programs in the planning. It is amazing how much of their time and their facilities business is willing to turn over to the school; and Detroit companies have not only provided equipment, but also personnel to train students either in school or out of school. For one semester a special instructor, in conjunction with the regular teacher, was provided at one of the high schools from the Michigan Bell Telephone Company to teach a course on job preparation. It is surprising sometimes



how well a student will accept information about the world of work when it comes directly from a real live company personnel director.

Last summer one of the companies set up special two-week training programs for students where they turned over some of the actual company filing and typing work to disadvantaged business education students. The students were paid a regular rate and did a regular job. It wasn't make-believe, it was a job that the company needed done. The companies have furnished work experience opportunities within their firms to a much greater extent after they became involved with the school than they were willing to before. They began to modify some of their testing programs realizing that they were missing many good applicants that could do an A-1 job but could not necessarily pass the test. As the students in this high school began to see the chances for success for them in this particular firm, more and more of them found a need for attempting to succeed in their classrooms. Their self-concept and perceptions of work were changing. Industry can do so much for the school.

Equipment is important in instruction. Four Detroit high schools have received full-unit record equipment to aid them in instruction for data processing. Not only the equipment, but company assistance in the educative process, the wiring necessary to make the facilities usable, and many of the small part types of items were provided. But there has been a great deal of difficulty in working with some of the firms in the initial process for two reasons. One is that the firms really don't know what educators need. The educator is still the professional in the process. On the other hand, the teachers really don't know what the company can do so it has been rough going for a short period of time in order to iron out some of the problems; but both groups need help.

The third item in helping students with special needs is the necessity of some type of work experience. Most of us are acquainted with the normal co-op program whether it be the office education or distributive education. These programs have required students to possess specific skills. Normally the jobs go to the students who have good attendance, that do have related training, who do have successful experiences as indicated by their grades in school, and who would make successful employees. If anything research bears out clearly, it is the fact that students with cooperative work experience do succeed in future life at a much higher rate than students who have not had this type of experience. At this point I am not suggesting that we abandon everything we have done in the form of selection of students for the cooperative program and fill these jobs with students who have special needs and no training. This would be ridiculous; it would just take a short time and we would completely ruin some of the programs that have been so difficult to establish.

What I am suggesting is that we do not wait until the 11th and 12th grade to specially prepare students for cooperative positions, but rather we go back perhaps all the way to the junior high school or in the case of 9th grade or the 8th grade and start orienting our students toward cooperative work experience. We might call it a pre-co-op program. The coordinator at the high school level could work with students at the

lower grades to prepare them for some of the experiences that they would find. It would be necessary to select another special group of students and give them special training over and above what we have been giving our normal students. If, at the high school level, the students cannot succeed in a normal cooperative work experience, then it is imperative that they be involved in some other type of work experience. But the work experience must be real. It must not be a situation where we pay people to do nothing. Because the students, as I also mentioned earlier, are very sharp; they know how meaningful and how important the work is that they are doing. Chicago has forged ahead of many of the large cities by adopting work experience programs specifically suited to students with special needs. But these can be greatly expanded. The Amendments to the Vocational Education Act of 1963 clearly point out that our federal government intends to do everything possible to involve students in some type of work experience, even to the extent of reimbursing employers for this type of work experience. This is the type of emphasis that is currently being placed on work programs.

If we are to succeed, we must change the student's perceptions to meet those that make him the most successful in his world of work. Before we can do any of the things that are described, we must first of all really explore the world as it appears to our academically unsuccessful students and their families; and this is something that you will be doing during the remainder of the workshop. Approach the remainder of the workshop as objectively as you possibly can, and always keep in mind that we are educators and are concerned with how students learn as well as what they learn.

A DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION TEACHER-COORDINATOR  
LOOKS AT WORKING WITH THE DISADVANTAGED

Augusta S. Hatton

When I had been teaching about three years in the school where I am presently employed, I was asked if I wanted to teach a class in shorthand. This was, at the time, one of the preferred classes by most of the teachers. I declined the offer because, by then, I had started teaching salesmanship and marketing; and shorthand, to me, requires a good background of English--at least business English. Anyone can learn shorthand, but everyone cannot transcribe. The students programmed into the Business Education department had many weaknesses in grammar and punctuation that could be readily observed in the merchandise manuals they prepared for salesmanship, the essay-type questions we might have on examinations, their reading ability in following directions, etc. Shorthand was my first love in high school, college, and when I taught in New York with the regents examination system. It is very obvious to me that students in inner-city schools do not have the background preparation that other schools offer.

The public, our legislature on the state and national levels, and the schools themselves realize that there is a difference. Now we are under the big "probe" of what is the difference, what causes the difference, and what can be done about it. I can tell you what the difference appears to be to me and what I think causes the difference. I don't know totally what can be done about it--I can just tell you what I do, as a teacher, to combat this difference.

My bachelor's and master's degrees in education did not prepare me for this type of teaching. We learned about individual differences, how to prepare and grade examinations, volumes of subject matter, how to handle various forms of discipline, psychology of education, psychology of the child from pre-kindergarten to the high school teen. There was nothing on the inner-city child who seems trapped before he really has a chance to live.

Our aim in distributive education is to prepare that student in our classes for the world of work. The big challenge for the inner-city teacher is to take that student right where he is and bring him to the level of his suburban counterpart who is often competing for the same job station. This task is often impossible; but when one of us inner-city teacher-coordinators succeeds, we feel more than just adding a feather to our cap. We decide to stay in teaching--not to transfer or give up completely. I am sure statistics will bear me out that there is a huge turnover of the administration and staffs of inner-city schools. Our own school is a true picture of this.

What is the difference in this inner-city child as opposed to the same child in the outer limits of the city and the suburbs? The first day



of school one would hardly know the difference except for the color of the students. As in most large cities, the students are mostly black. They are dressed in the latest style or fashion, all new clothes from top to bottom and the latest style in hairdo--everything's near perfect as the saying goes. The teacher is so busy with administrative duties--checking admission slips, calling the role, assigning seats, giving outlines of the course for the whole semester--that much escapes her. She probably goes home after the first few days, if she's a new teacher, and tells family and friends that she loves teaching and that it isn't at all what she thought it was going to be. Four weeks later she doesn't know how she can make it if she is at all conscientious. As a coordinator she might have been teaching a class in salesmanship, a class in marketing, and a D.E. co-op class. Her coordination work to be done seemed simple because the coordinator who left had placed half the students already, according to her notes, and left the names of some prospective employers. For some reason only ten of the co-op students showed up at the class. Only two of them had been placed at work stations. The students who did not show up had been transferred and kept their jobs, and the ones who had them over the summer decided to quit school. Does she condemn the coordinator who left because he made a poor choice of students, or does she silently comply with the administration's wishes that she build up the class, otherwise the class will be discontinued? She knows nothing of programming, counseling, how to find the appropriate students, and the prospective employers on the list have told her they had no openings or else they didn't like students from her school. By now the students in the other two classes have started a regular poor attendance pattern, excessive tardiness by at least a third of the total classes, and incompleteness of homework assignments. Three have lost their textbooks even though they were free. Mary who comes everyday is a wisecracker and pops gum everytime you are not looking. She has told you many times she is just in the class because she needed the five hours. John and Pete settled an argument right in the classroom when Pete stepped on John's foot and didn't apologize. The language was something one had never heard before or wanted to hear. A private conference in the coordinator's small, improvised office was very uncomfortable, atmosphere-wise, because one of the boys needed a bath and also had several visible cavities in his front teeth; and the teacher was realizing that he was one of the boys she had just recruited for the co-op program. He had been recommended by another teacher.

The above situations are not exaggerations. Some of the incidents have happened to me, and I am sure that some have happened to other teacher-coordinators in the inner-city schools. They could relate just as many instances. On paper we are given the definition of the disadvantaged as one who is culturally deprived, socially deprived, economically depressed. The teacher in the inner-city schools will give other definitions. He is the boy who has never had a father in the home. Time and again on the information cards in school the address of the father is unknown. Hence, there is very little discipline in the home. Inner-city school neighborhoods are filled with ADC (Aid to Dependent Children) mothers. They have large families and no visible means of

support, no training to get a job, no one to take care of the children left at home if a job were obtained, and teenage children who have reached the "out of control" stage. What most of us consider normal health and eating habits are at an extreme minimum. I have helped many girls to learn that the fork goes to the left of the plate and the knife on the right and the spoon on the right of the knife. The poor condition of the teeth with large amounts of cavities and great accumulations of calculus have been deterrents in job placements and, if placed, in the type of job and the promotion. Children who were allowed to supervise themselves from age two, to be allowed to play in the street or in the alley or to go to the store with another child, four years of age, naturally learn to take care of themselves in any situation and will gladly tell the teacher they don't care if the teacher tells the mother anything that they can take care of themselves. So the threat of a letter home to the parent often has little value. The families are very transient. The spaces on every application form that I have seen are not enough for the number of schools the child has attended. He can't remember all of the schools, either.

In one class, one semester, half the class had gone to seven or more schools before attending the present high school. There is no place to study in the home. Large families spread all over the house utilizing every amount of space. Noise is at a premium. Little children in the family continually bother the books and projects and papers that the older ones bring home. There is no habit or pattern set to utilize the libraries in the neighborhoods; hence, the libraries are either closing or cutting their hours. Magazine subscriptions are extremely low in number; and, in the same class I mentioned above, half the homes did not receive the daily newspaper. Stores in the areas are usually small businessmen who have very little training in the retailing field. There is not one display window that I can use as a good example in the whole area. Large groups of men hang on corners of the busiest street that is one of the highest "crime" streets in our city. Every available or known type of crime seems to have happened there. Seven years ago (two years before I became a coordinator), one of my students told me I shouldn't go out on Mack Avenue for my own sake and safety. Today the condition of the street has changed for the worse. Yet, supposedly, that is where I am supposed to do my coordinating. Start with the neighborhood first, I was told. Out on one of the other main streets in our area one of my prospective employers was robbed and shot at 1:30 in the afternoon within a stone's throw of four work stations. Had I not been at a meeting that day, I might have been on that same corner. Sometimes I think that the teacher of the disadvantaged is disadvantaged herself or himself. It is a complete turnabout from the school I taught co-op in in the little town in western New York and the school in Detroit when I first arrived there eleven years ago.

Areas around the schools and streets are littered with paper, cans, and bottles. Businessmen will not sweep the front areas of their stores. Alleys are filled with boxes and overflowing garbage cans. Houses are in need of repairs so extensive that some should be torn down and built again. The inner-city is not pleasant. Even its schools reflect the

community. The buildings are old. Painting does not come often enough to cover up the wear and tear that all buildings endure. After eleven years, we finally got a screen for projectors in our D.E. room; and now the window shades are torn and broken.

Again, the picture presented is an unpleasant one; but there is no exaggeration here, either. I've covered what is the disadvantaged student, what circumstances he is under that causes the difference, and now I'd like to tell you what I do to teach and help overcome that difference. Let me list:

1. Homework and assignments. The room is opened early in the morning for those who want to do their work in a quiet atmosphere. Newspaper assignments are given, but I bring in several newspapers and magazines that can be used, read, or cut. This alleviates my frustration of having to accept good excuses for not having certain assignments completed.
2. Discipline. I attend almost every athletic event that I can. Our co-op class ushers for the senior plays in the fall and spring semesters. Students like faculty participation at school events. Through observation I have come to believe that those teachers who show any kind of extra interest in their students' outside activities usually have very little discipline problems.
3. Community relations. We have several community organizations to which any teacher can belong. The Parent Associations and the 5th Precinct Police Organization are ones that I have chosen to attend. Good relations with parents also helps the inner-city coordinator or teacher with discipline or any other situation that might arise. Prospective employers often attend these meetings.
4. Placement problems. I have to keep my eyes and ears open 24 hours a day. This is a time when jobs are precious, and many employers have cut down on part-time help. Friends, members of the family, and teachers in our school are aiding me in finding possible work stations. For the small employers I even go to the labor department for him when he takes the boy or girl under eighteen when he would rather have the older employee. Many co-op students keep their jobs upon graduation, and new work stations have to be obtained.
5. Co-op vs. regular students. This problem was told to me prior to taking over the co-op program. Teachers would resent the coordinator's "free" afternoons, not having a duty, and always getting off early. Also, the coordinator had fewer students, two less classes. To date this has not been a problem with me in our school. I can talk a lot, and others know where I go and what I do. They not only hear from me but mostly from my students. They are a coordinator's best publicity agent.



Coordinators' reputations are built or destroyed by their students. The majority of them will not tell you how glad and thankful they are to you for finding work for them and for helping them. The few that do seem to speak for the entire group. The coordinator should be thankful she or he was able to help.

6. Getting through the interview. We like interviews to come before the co-op class has begun, but oftentimes we find that the semester is well advanced before Mary or Joe has a chance to have one. I have often taken a boy home at the end of the program, waited for him to get into his shirt and tie, only to find there was no necktie. I have neckties in school to handle this unbelievable situation. There are needle and thread, extra buttons, mending tape, soap and a nail brush for those who need them. In the car the most personalized instruction is carried on while going to that interview. We cover everything from the beginning handshake, if there is one, to the last goodbye and thank you. One of my students had never been downtown before until I took her for an interview. She had lost all confidence because of the location of the work station; but to this day, she is one of the firm's most valuable employees. She told me she remembered everything I told her. I wish there were more like Steveanna.
7. Bulletin boards and displays. Inner-city schoolrooms are in dire need of immediate "perking up." We try to achieve this through the use of bulletin boards and displays. Help can be obtained from artistic students, through the art department, or through my own classes. Although we have no room to store materials, we keep current displays with mine and the students' own merchandise and the other D.E. teacher's collections. Nothing is disturbed in our room. The only vandalism has been when bottles or rocks have been thrown in our room from the outside. They usually hit every room sooner or later so that no specific room was the target.
8. Course content. D.E. offers many varieties of subject matter, and students seem to respond more readily in a D.E. course than, for example, in business arithmetic or recordkeeping. Those are necessary courses, and in D.E. we do embrace those subjects, too. The field is so wide with such topics as shopping centers, trading stamps, selling, cashiering, stock, bagging, etc. The teacher is never lost for want of a stimulating unit. There are many ways to present this material. The subject matter allows the teacher to get away from the lecture method and to move around the room supervising projects, other work such as displays, filling out application forms, operating the cash register, and field trips are among the few. Even in forty-minute periods the attention span is short. Yours might be short, too, if you had no breakfast this morning, if you lost your lunch card and had no money for lunch, and you missed the last four days of school

because you had to stay home to care for young ones in the family because your mother had gone to visit your sick grandmother.

What holds that D.E. coordinator in the inner-city? She or he is hoping in the near future that counselors in their school would have only 100 students to counsel instead of 300 to 400. They are hoping they will soon have the complete set-up for a real store instead of leaving everything up to the imagination of the students like "let's pretend." It would help if more meetings such as this would be held for inner-city coordinators where they could exchange ideas and offer suggestions with problems. More cooperation is needed at a higher level to help bridge the gap between the employer and the coordinator who is out ringing doorbells looking for work stations. We would love to have a textbook that would cover the topics and units with the right vocabulary and the capability of being understood by all. These are just a few of the things that would keep that inner-city teacher-coordinator even longer in the school where continuity should be king.

## WHAT DECA CAN DO FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

Robert Bailey

In discussing the teaching of DECA to the "disadvantaged", I would like first to say that as far as I am concerned, kids are kids, and I have considered and always will consider my students to be just as capable if not more so than other students. Based on this belief, I worked with my students and proved to them, myself, and many others that so-called "disadvantaged" students can be successful in learning things that will be useful to them in the world of work.

I am not really here today to tell you about the winning of DECA contests because, although this does help in motivating students, it is not the prime function of DECA as far as I am concerned. I have tried to use DECA as a tool to get students involved, interested, and motivated in things they can use now and in the future while working. If there is any one thing that I would like to get across to you it is the fact that you must get the students involved in what they are doing in the class. I promise you that you will be amazed at what your students can do if you just give them a chance.

I have often heard DECA criticized because it only benefits a few students who go to state and national DECA conventions and those that enter contests. Many times this is probably a valid observation but only because we as teachers don't use DECA to get the most benefit from it. The truth is that the strength and importance of DECA doesn't lie at the state and national levels but in the local DECA chapters and their activities. To prove my point I would like to briefly highlight some of the activities that my students participated in this past school year as members of the Southwestern High School DECA Chapter.

Our first DECA related activity was "The DECA Hotline," a newspaper written and published by the students. When my students went to the Detroit DECA city elections, they really felt bad because nobody had ever heard of Southwestern High School. One of the students suggested that we publish a newspaper to send around to the other schools so that everyone would know that we existed. We had a student editor, student reporters, and even students that called other DECA chapters in the city of Detroit to gather news. In the beginning it seemed that I was doing quite a bit of the work; but as time went on, I gave more and more responsibility to the students until they were running the whole paper. We put out six editions last year with at least one edition going to all DECA chapters in the state. We also sent copies to present and prospective employers. Through this project the students learned that they could work together to accomplish something worthwhile plus they learned responsibility, how to use the telephone better, and better writing skills.

During the first semester I covered such topics as sales demonstrations, public speaking, job interview, display, and advertising



layout. Each of these subject areas is also the title of a DECA contest. To show you that DECA can be used to aid all students when working with the contests, I would like to go very quickly how I get students involved in learning job interview.

The first day I put a large pile of job applications (using the DECA interview application) on my desk. I pass out the applications with no instructions and only tell them to work on their own and do the best they can. I also offer one dollar to anybody that can do a perfect application the first time. (I haven't lost any dollars yet). As each student finishes, he brings his paper up to me in the front of the room. I point out the errors and send him back to his seat with the old application blank and a nice new clean one. We do this for two or three days depending on how long it takes the majority of the students to do a perfect application. As a student turns in a perfect application, I assign him to help other students who are having trouble.

After we have the application mastered, we spend two days on terms used in an application and on the actual interview. In connection with this, we play a game called "Tic Tac Toe, What Do You Know?" This is a fairly simple game where the class is divided into two groups (the x's and the o's). Each team tries to win a game of tic-tac-toe by answering questions asked by the teacher on job application terms. Each time a team gets the correct answer, they get their x or o in the proper box. The first team to get tic-tac-toe wins the game, and the team that wins gets ten extra points in my grade book.

The remainder of the time spent on job interview is spent role playing. Each student in the class gets a chance to interview for a job. Before the students do their interviews in class, I always let one of them interview me. They always get a kick out of this, and I think they see that I am not making them do something that I wouldn't do myself. After my interview, I usually stage an interview where the student being interviewed does everything wrong. The students not only get a good laugh out of it, but they learn how bad it looks to do these things in an interview. In job interview I do not grade the interview myself. The students that are not involved in the actual interview have rating sheets at their desks that they fill out on all of the interviews. From these rating sheets the grades are determined. I have found it must successful to begin the interviews with the most verbal students in the class so that the other students can see how it is done. In some cases I have had to hold the interview after school because the student was afraid to come up and talk in front of the class. I never force a student to do something he doesn't want to do.

In teaching job interview the students help each other on the applications, get to talk in front of a group, rate their fellow students, and learn that accuracy is important. All students in the class participate in the learning process, and the student that will represent us in the job interview contest is the one judged best by the class itself.

In the annual recruitment drive in the spring, the students really went to town. A "DECA Information Booth" was constructed by the students. The booth was put out in the hall and was manned by DECA students who recruited over 100 students for next year's marketing classes and about 25 students for the D.E. co-op class. On their own the students gave their free time to sit in the booth and talk to students that had questions on the distributive education program. They were really proud that they were doing something to help build up the distributive education program. This was another excellent learning experience because the students had to formulate a presentation to make to prospective students, they worked together in constructing the booth, and they got a sense of pride from really doing something worthwhile.

Outside school activities promoted by DECA are an important part of DECA's contribution to the development of the "disadvantaged" students. Some of our outside activities included a Christmas party, a picnic for orphans, a picnic of an amusement park, and trips to other DECA chapters in the city of Detroit. Through these activities the students learned that learning does not all take place in the classroom but that they can also learn by doing. The activities also give the students a sense of togetherness, a sense of pride, and many wonderful memories.

Besides our local activities, my students attended the city and state DECA conferences where they met new friends, talked about similar problems, and practiced their table manners. I do not know how learning from an experience such as this can be measured, but I do know that my students do learn from doing things like this. They learn things about other people and about themselves. Six of my students entered local and state DECA contests, and I feel that they had a great learning experience. They got to experience some of the pressures that the real world can exert on you. They were in the competition, but they also became friends with their competitors. Whether they won or lost in the competition, they were all winners in the game of life.

By using DECA in my classroom, I can make the material I teach much more meaningful for my students by getting them involved. DECA is not teaching from a textbook or by lecturing for 40 minutes every day. DECA is doing, and doing is what the students want. They want something they can see and do, not something abstract that has no real meaning. I feel one of the reasons that I have been so successful with DECA is because it is something real in their world where so many things are abstract and hard to see. Actually, doing things that they learn in the classroom is what they want; and through DECA, this is what they get. Also, there are things to be learned that can't possibly be taught in the classroom but must be experiences of an individual on a one-to-one basis. Through DECA I think this is being done. Students make lasting friendships, experience new things together, and learn together. They learn what teamwork is, what motivation is, and what pride is. These things are among the most important things that all of us must learn. When used properly, DECA can be the first step toward success for not only the "disadvantaged" student but for all students.

## SUPPORTING COOPERATIVE PROGRAMS DESIGNED FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

Richard J. Shupe

### Advantages of Cooperative Education

One of the greatest current concerns about education is the relevance of curriculum and instruction to the needs and interests of present-day youth. Cooperative vocational education has some built-in features that help to insure relevant instruction when properly used. Some of these features include:

1. Students are placed on jobs that are in harmony with their interests and abilities.
2. Each student follows a plan of on-the-job experiences which is based on occupational requirements and individual student needs.
3. Students have the opportunity to learn skills on real jobs under actual working conditions.
4. Classroom instruction, on-the-job training, and student club activities, when appropriate, are articulated in the development of clearly defined competencies.
5. Students have an active role in the choice of content and methods because of their unique experiences which motivate them to seek education for their developing personal needs.

### Definition of Cooperative Vocational Education--Pertains to Both Part B and Part G Programs

Since there are several types and many forms of cooperative education, and the terms mean many things to people, it seems essential to good communication that cooperative vocational education be defined:

**Definition:** Cooperative vocational education is a technique of instruction in a program of vocational education for persons who, through a cooperative arrangement between the school and employers, receive instruction, including required academic courses and related vocational instruction by alternation of study in school with a job in any occupational field; but these two experiences must be planned and supervised by the school and employers so that each contributes to the student's education and to his employability. Work periods and school attendance



may be on alternate half-days, full days, weeks, or other period of time in fulfilling the cooperative vocational education program.

This definition contains three criteria for co-op programs:

1. Students receive instruction, including required academic courses and related vocational instruction by alternation of study in school with a job in any occupational field.
2. These two experiences must be planned and supervised by the school and employers so that each contributes to the student's education and to his employability, and
3. Work periods and school attendance may be on alternate half-days, full days, weeks or other periods of time.

#### Cooperative Vocational Education Funding

Under the 1968 Vocational Education Amendments, cooperative education may be funded under two parts: Part B--State Vocational Education Programs, and Part G--Cooperative Vocational Education Programs. Regularly reimbursed cooperative vocational education programs will be funded under Part B of the Act according to application criteria developed in the State Plan. Allocation of funds (Part G) is in terms of priority to areas within the state having high rates of school dropouts and youth unemployments. Specifically, priority of funding will be given to the areas in which there is a concentration of school dropouts consisting of those school districts where the dropout rate is equal to or exceeds the state average. Post-secondary institutions shall be eligible to offer the program provided that one or more school districts which meet the above criteria are located in the service area of the post-secondary institution.

Other funding considerations:

1. A local education agency may be reimbursed for cooperative vocational education expenditures under Part B and/or Part G of the Act.
2. Part B funds may be used for the continuation of existing vocational education programs and for expansion of cooperative education to additional youth and occupational fields. The amount of reimbursement for local expenditures depends on the application criteria established in a State Plan.
3. Part G funds are meant for the development of new cooperative programs, especially in designated areas of high rates of dropouts and unemployed youth. The advantages of Part G may be:
  - a. Possible funding up to 100% of program cost.

- b. Possible reimbursement of employers for added costs of on-the-job training for cooperative students.
  - c. Possible reimbursement of supervisory, teacher training, and other ancillary costs.
  - d. Possible payment of certain expenses such as transportation of working students.
  - e. Inclusion of non-profit private school students in the program.
4. Allocation of funds (Part B) is established on the basis of manpower needs and job opportunities, vocational education needs, ability of the agency to pay, and relative costs of the program. Allocation of funds (Part G) is in terms of priority to areas having high rates of school dropouts and youth unemployment.

Types of Cooperative Vocational Education Programs Available to Local Educational Agencies in Michigan

PLAN A--Capstone lab approach

- 1. Students complete prerequisite courses
- 2. Related instruction given to co-op students as a group taught by coordinator
- 3. Average of one period per day for related instruction
- 4. Minimum amount of occupational experience--one semester-15 hours per week average

PLAN B--Co-op program as total entity

- 1. Students not taken previous courses or programs relating to occupational area
- 2. Block period of related instruction or sufficient units of job related instruction
- 3. One school year with average of 15 hours

PLAN C--Short-term co-op experience program

- 1. Student already enrolled in a lab
- 2. Co-op is of short-term nature, i.e., after school for several weeks, or

3. Co-op experience is viewed as supplemental learning for a student in a lab class
4. Ideally suited for area vocational centers where students are already in a block lab and may substitute lab for co-op for a limited period of time
5. Students must be paid
6. Lab teacher maintains close liaison with the cooperative education coordinator
7. School credit for co-op experience given via the lab class

#### PLAN D

Plan D is designed primarily to assist disadvantaged youth in adjusting to the work environment by providing supervised and coordinated on-the-job training with related classroom instruction. Such programs will recognize the differing aspirations and ability levels of youth. Disadvantaged students enrolled in the lower high school grade levels may be considered as eligible for cooperative experience, provided they are at least fourteen years of age and provided they are enrolled in a vocational education program. Although no average hours per week are specified, it is desirable that Plan D programs operate for a full school year and that students in these programs work a minimum average of 15 hours per week for the duration of the program.

#### Special provisions relative to Plan D include:

1. Priority of funding

Priority of funding cooperative vocational programs will be those educational agencies qualifying under the definition of "areas of high concentration of youth unemployment and school dropouts."

2. Related instruction

Concentration of basic work adjustment instruction for disadvantaged youth enrolled in cooperative programs may contain modules of basic instruction as needed to bring students to an educational standard necessary for entry employment.

Special educational services which allow for basic or remedial reading, writing, computing and communication skills required for adequate job performance should be considered. In addition, relevant directly related and career depth instruction should be included in the instructional program.

3. Costs to students

The Department of Education may reimburse local education



agencies for unusual costs of students resulting from their participation in cooperative education programs. Reimbursement is limited to those costs which are not reasonably required of persons engaged in the field of employment for which cooperative education is provided. Such reimbursement shall not have the effect of underwriting personal obligations and expenses which students in similar circumstances are reasonably expected to assume.

(Special tools and clothing, transportation, safety and other protective devices and work paraphernalia are services included as unusual costs provided they are not normally furnished by the employer).

The local education agency will retain such special tools and other equipment which have a minimum cost of \$25.00 per unit, i.e., a set of tools. (Other supply items, including special clothing or work paraphernalia may be kept by the cooperative student provided that he remains in the cooperative education program for a period of at least 30 days from the beginning date of such employment.)

#### 4. Additional cost of employers

One of the purposes of the funds available under Plan D is to reimburse employers for the added costs of training beyond the ordinary costs of training new employees. Only when it can be established that, without such reimbursement, employers cannot provide quality on-the-job training should local education agencies submit "added cost payment" requests.

Categories of eligible costs include the following:

- a. Additional time of training sponsors/employers
- b. Special instructional materials
- c. Special formal training sessions not normally provided
- d. Clerical help required to keep necessary records and reports

Such added employers' costs will not include the cost of construction of facilities; purchases of equipment, and other capital costs which would accrue to the benefit of the employers.

The length of time in which employers are eligible to claim reimbursement of excess costs is limited to ninety work days.

These added costs must be set forth in the training agreement identifying and justifying the cost factor applied, the amount of funds to be paid, and the duration of the reimbursement. A written training agreement is essential in order to identify and "cost-out" activities not normally provided in the firm's regular training program. A copy of the written training plan shall be submitted to the Department of Education for review.

#### Application Procedures for the 1970-71 School Year

Federal funds totaling \$217,271 from Part G of the Vocational Education Act of 1968 are still available from the 1969-70 federal allocation. A special amendment to the Elementary Secondary Education Act makes it permissible to utilize these funds until June 30, 1971. In addition, we anticipate an appropriation for Part G for fiscal 1970-71 of approximately \$353,000. These funds will also be available for programs through June 30, 1971.

To be eligible for these funds, school districts in those areas of the state having a high concentration of school dropouts and youth unemployment are encouraged to submit requests for new and expanded cooperative education programs. Programs under this provision of the Act are referred to as "Plan D" in the Michigan Guide for the Administration of Vocational and Technical Education. These programs will be on a project, contractual basis, funded through Part G of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968. Further, it should be clearly understood that the regularly reimbursed cooperative education programs will be funded under Part B of the Act.

All programs and projects approved for the 1970-71 school year will be funded under Part G provisions of the Act at 90% reimbursement rate. The 10% local share must be a direct in-cash contribution.

Instructional staff assigned to Plan D co-op programs must hold or be eligible to obtain a vocational teaching certificate. In certain instances, however, the school district may wish to employ a counselor or some other regularly certified teacher who has the empathy and ability to work effectively with disadvantaged persons and with the business and industrial community.

Application forms (VE-4002) for Plan D cooperative education programs are available from the Division of Vocational Education upon request. If your school system is planning to operate a Plan D program during the 1970-71 school year, you should request and complete the application form as soon as possible. This will allow sufficient time for divisional staff to process the application and provide notification to schools regarding the approval of such programs, prior to the beginning of school this fall. Although applications will be accepted until October 1, 1970, the priority of program applications is based upon:

1. Date program application is received in the Division of Vocational Education and,
2. Local educational areas in the state in which the high school dropout rate is equal to or exceeds the state average.

Plan D cooperative programs are characterized by the flexibility of program design. The following are examples of programs which can be supported under Plan D:

1. Short-term intensive cooperative programs, adaptable to students who need a modified instructional program until they are ready for regular cooperative education programs.
2. Offer unemployed youth who have left the full-time school the opportunity to learn an occupation through a cooperative program.
3. Special self-contained programs which are composed of both related instruction and on-the-job instruction.
4. Development of cooperative programs in areas of high concentration of school dropouts and youth unemployment where such programs do not now exist.
5. Preparation of curriculum materials designed for disadvantaged students.
6. Employment of a teacher to be the co-op coordinator in a program during the 1970-71 school year (for program planning purposes).
7. Ancillary, supportive services provided for disadvantaged students in a regular cooperative education program (see the Administrative Guide).

All students in Plan D programs should have as a component specific vocational instruction during the time they are enrolled in the program.



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS FOR THE DISADVANTAGED  
WITH EMPHASIS ON WORK/STUDY PROGRAMS

Mark E. Lewis

The school has a responsibility to provide all students with the academic tools necessary to cope with changing environment in which they live. Also, the school shares with other institutions a responsibility to help each student understand himself, his environment, and his relationship to his environment.

Technological and social changes have brought about an increase in the level of academic proficiency necessary to cope with the environment in which we find ourselves. Thirty years ago a person with a fifth grade education stood a good chance of becoming a contributing member of society. Today such a person is more apt to be a liability to society. Our society's response to this problem has been to extend the period of formal schooling. Most educators know that "more of the same thing" will not accomplish the schools' objectives with a significant portion of our students. The schools have never enjoyed marked success with the "disadvantaged" student in terms of getting him to stay around until he earned a high school diploma. Since we have not made significant changes in our school organization or teaching techniques, why should we expect great success now? We have made some improvement in our holding power, but the quality of education for "disadvantaged" students still falls short of that of "middle class" students. Why? Obviously, we are not agreed as to the reasons, but we are beginning to identify some factors which inhibit learning. There is general agreement that under-nourishment has a detrimental effect on learning ability. Undernourished babies do not develop intellectually at the same rate as well-nourished children. There is general agreement that intellectual stimulation in the home during the first five years of life greatly influences the learning capacity of the child. We know, of course, that most children of disadvantaged parents are undernourished and that there is little intellectual challenge in the home.

Children from disadvantaged homes are at a serious disadvantage when they start school at age 5 or 6. Some schools are attacking this problem through "pre-school" programs which start at age 3 and which require participation of the parents (primarily mothers). Social and academic development are given equal stress. The parents develop a better relationship with their children (and with each other) and learn techniques of stimulating their children to pursue activities which will contribute to their intellectual development. If this pre-school program is an integral part of the school system or closely coordinated with it, the chances that the disadvantaged child will compete successfully in a heterogeneous classroom are greatly improved. In the absence of this coordination, the effect of the pre-school training is reduced because the kindergarten teacher puts each child through the same training program.

There are many attempts to "individualize" instruction in school. A formal approach to individualization is the ungraded school. A more common approach used by teachers is to analyze the learning strengths and weaknesses of each child and to develop a program specifically for him which is designed to maximize his chances for success. All teachers should be trained in this procedure during their formal teacher preparation.

One of the greatest deterrents to learning is absence from school. Students from disadvantaged homes very early develop a pattern of absence which grows as they go through the grades. Few schools do enough to encourage parents to get their children to school. In Benton Harbor we plan to increase our attendance staff from one person to four for the 1970-71 school year. At the same time, our curriculum department will try to identify the reasons why many children prefer to stay home and watch TV in preference to school. The real challenge will be to correct the problems once we have identified them.

In Benton Harbor about 60% of our graduates enroll in institutions of higher learning. Probably half of those who enroll actually complete a four-year program. We have no accurate statistics on our dropout rate, but the number of youth living in the community who have less than a high school education is substantial. Our holding power from grade 5 through 12 is about 67%, but many of these are move-outs rather than dropouts. In the last five years there has been a significant exodus of whites and an influx of blacks. Even with our limited information about the paths our students take after leaving school, it is obvious to us that a college prep program is not appropriate for a large number of our students. In addition to curricular modifications and tightening up on attendance, we plan to strengthen vocational education. We will employ a person, give him the title of Occupation Information Specialist, and assign him to work with elementary and junior high school teachers so that children will receive broader exposure to the world of work. This specialist will also work with junior high and high school counselors in an attempt to keep their knowledge about the work world current.

We have expanded our vocational training program through a cooperative venture with industry. The school staff drew up plans for a Skill Center and located an unused factory building about a mile from the high school. A proposal was made to industry which resulted in remodeling of the building to accommodate seven vocational training stations. Industry also cooperated in equipping the building. The Skill Center will enroll regular students, dropouts, and adults who want retraining.

Heavy emphasis is being placed on work experience. Our regular distributive education program will move into a large equipped laboratory classroom in September. The teaching staff will increase from 2+ to four. One of the four will concentrate on the education and placement of disadvantaged students. This teacher will carry a lighter work load than the others to permit more individualization of instruction and more on-the-job supervision time. A full-time Coordinator of Trade and Industry will replace a part-time person shared with another district. This staff of five should enable us to accommodate about 300 students in a work/study program.



We are considering two additional programs which are designed to improve the educational program for the disadvantaged. One plan is to bring about a closer relationship between academic and vocational education through teaming vocational teachers with English, math, and science teachers. Through team planning, the curriculum will be so inter-related that the student will see the application of academic skills to the solution of problems he will encounter in the work world. This plan has been used successfully in a number of school districts across the country, but it is still not accepted by many academic subject teachers.

The second plan involves removing selected students from the structured high school setting to a more formal atmosphere. This idea comes from the Parkway Project of Philadelphia where students attend scheduled classes in industrial, government, or private buildings throughout the city. We will probably establish a home base in a downtown location where teachers can maintain an office and teaching supplies and where students will come for special services such as testing, remedial instruction, counseling, and discussion sessions. Instructional stations can be anywhere in the Twin Cities area. Most instructional assignments will be carried on in small groups or the student will be enrolled in a regular class at the high school, Skill Center, or junior college. Students who do not have jobs will be placed on a part-time basis.

We believe that a job is one of the best educational experiences to which a student can be exposed. A job teaches punctuality, good work habits and, most important of all, it shows the student where he has deficiencies or gaps in the "tool" subjects. If he discovers these deficiencies himself, he will be much more receptive to class instruction which is designed to remove the deficiencies.

Our goal is to expose every student to work experience before graduation. A significant number of our students will spend at least half of the regular school day at a job station or a vocational training station.



A DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION SUPERVISOR LOOKS AT  
TEACHER PREPARATION FOR WORKING WITH THE DISADVANTAGED

Theressa Brinson

In a changing world such as ours, it is most evident that teacher preparation goes beyond taking courses in a college curriculum and putting in time as a student teacher. Our explosive introduction to the space age has brought us face to face with the realization of the importance of learning about what is going on. Obviously, what today's teachers were taught at school and have since picked up from newspaper headlines does not go far toward helping them to feel at home in today's world.

We have also discovered a group of students in our schools whom we have labeled disadvantaged. The U. S. Office of Education has written lengthy descriptions of these students with which I am sure all of you are familiar.

How can we, as teachers, help the disadvantaged child become a useful contributing member of society? This question has plagued educators for years, but recently the problem has been brought into focus through the concentrated efforts of civic action groups, sociologists, psychologists, educators, and other segments of our population. As a result of heightened interest in this problem, federal funds have been made available to provide resources which can, if properly used, bring about much-needed change and improvement in educational opportunities and experiences for disadvantaged children.

The present interest in the disadvantaged youth of America cannot be attributed to any single development; however, the increased level of education, skill, and understanding necessary if one is to find a productive place in a technological society such as ours must be high on the list of causative influences. Menial tasks requiring little specialized training have become less plentiful because of the replacement of man by machines in "common labor" areas. In addition, due to automation, fewer factory workers are required in some production areas, although productivity or output is at a new high. Without the ability to do skilled work and without the motivation and ability to adjust to change and learn new skills, the disadvantaged young people of today will be the lost and unfulfilled adults of tomorrow.

Youngsters growing up in depressed neighborhoods become increasingly aware of an affluent society which exists for others but is out of reach for them.. The easy, pleasure-filled life of material things seems to be available only if one is born with the right skin color or happens to live in the right part of town. Often frustrated and bored by school and a curriculum which seems void of relevance to the life and culture of the child, the disadvantaged youngster may drop out of school early, only to add his name to the increasingly long list of welfare recipients.

No agency in a community can change the entire fabric of society. Numerous groups, foundations, and trained professionals must make their contributions to the improvement of lives of the impoverished and disadvantaged. One of the key efforts in the campaign must be made in the area of education if we are to succeed in eradicating this problem from the list of national ills. Educational programs for the disadvantaged must be given a high priority. This educational commitment must include increasing amounts of money, renewed dedication, and intelligent use of available resources.

Success of any agency is contingent upon the ability of individuals within the agency to implement a suitable program. In school situations, informed, motivated, and flexible teachers using appropriate materials to teach pertinent subject matter are the keys to success.

To succeed in bringing about changes that will heighten the chances of the disadvantaged to be successful, teachers must be equipped with special knowledge and skills. Each teacher must know and understand the disadvantaged child--who he is, his social and psychological characteristics, and what he thinks and feels. Further, the teacher must know appropriate learning theory and be able to apply it. Materials and methods particularly suited to alleviating anxiety and improving the child's self-concept must be thoroughly familiar to her. Without such a background, his or her task will be that much more difficult, and often impossible to fulfill.

Today's teacher must, therefore, be able to deal with both the handicapped learner and the talented one; and he needs great insight and ability to help a handicapped learner become a talented one. Teachers are expected to work with the slow readers and the non-readers who, in earlier days, would have left school. Today, a wiser and a more concerned society no longer ignores the dropout, and teachers are expected to be educational and psychological experts who can keep the dropout in school and make schooling vital and useful to him.

Clearly, the pressures from both eager disadvantaged parents and anxious middle-class parents are legitimate. Adjusting the school to respond constructively to these pressures remains, nevertheless, a difficult undertaking that cannot be successful without capable teachers.

In much of the literature concerning the education of the disadvantaged student, the role of the classroom teacher is central. Rivlin has pointed out that "even the most imaginative superintendent and the most cooperative board of education cannot solve the problems of urban education until the schools get an adequate supply of skilled and under-teachers, and then make optimum use of these teachers' abilities."

While teacher preparation and in-service training programs are beginning to follow somewhat traveled paths, numerous pitfalls and detours persist. In what ways and to what extent, for instance, should the academic portion of pre-service preparation differ for the teacher of the disadvantaged from that of teachers for other schools? What kinds of professional preparation are necessary?



No radical innovations mark the current teacher-preparing programs. They do, however, reveal these adaptations:

1. There is now an early contact with children and adults in disadvantaged areas in a variety of school and non-school related activities. In some instances, steps have been made to make this contact continuous.
2. Social and behavioral scientists have become intensively involved. They have been asked to apply research and theory from their disciplines to the specific needs and problems of disadvantaged populations.
3. There is more involvement of educators working with the teacher education faculty in planning, supervising, and evaluating experiences. An example of this is the intern program in the Business and Distributive Education Department at Wayne State University.
4. There are many opportunities for preservice experiences with community agencies whose range allows for more insight into the life styles of disadvantaged students, and, therefore, greater empathy for their difficulties.
5. There is more frequent exposure to remedial and diagnostic procedures and to methods for individualizing instruction. Many authors have developed materials and resources designed for the disadvantaged segment of our population. Strategies for classroom control and management have also been devised.

I would like to give you a hypothetical model of the successful teacher of disadvantaged pupils.

The successful teacher is one who respects the students in his classes, and they, in turn, respect him. When the average teachers in slum schools look at their pupils, they see children who are discouraged and defeated not only in the early grades, but also in high school. These students express their alienation from the school and the society it represents by aggressive behavior or a tuned-out state of lethargy and listlessness. They are usually against the ethical, moral, and legal codes of society and make little effort to learn or better themselves. Even though the teacher might feel sorry for them, he should not write them off as hopeless, or as too dumb to learn.

The teacher who successfully works with disadvantaged children respects them, and not because he sees them through rose-colored glasses. In fact, he sees them realistically as different from middle-class children, but as young people coping in their own way with the trials and frustrations of growing up. He recognizes their struggle to survive in the ruthless world of their peers and how confused they are by the two worlds in which they live--the one of the poor home, the street, and the environment, and the other of the society and the school.



The successful teacher, of necessity, becomes a student and views the alien culture as something he must learn more about. He learns to understand the background from which the students have come, the values placed on various achievements, and the kind of life styles to which they aspire.

He also becomes cognizant of the reasons for their unwillingness to strive toward future goals.

If he familiarizes himself with the home life of the students, he will understand why they bear the scars of under-stimulation. It is rare when children from disadvantaged backgrounds are helped to name the things that they see, feel, and hear, to recognize similarities and differences, to categorize and classify perceptions, to learn words for objects, and ways to express ideas and feelings.

It is important that the successful teacher knows the various family structures from which the children come. There are several kinds:

1. The matriarchal family where there is no father present.
2. The home where there are two parents--both working.
3. The welfare home.
4. The ADC home.
5. The home where the father is disabled and the mother works.
6. The home where all relatives--aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents all live in the same small quarters.

It is imperative that the successful teacher become aware of the ethnic group membership of his students and how it shapes the child's image of himself and of his world. He should learn about the history, social structure, and traditions of the various ethnic groups. Since cultural patterns vary, and each one is unique, the teacher must avail himself of all kinds of resources so he can understand the blocks and frustrations of the group, their status in American society, and how they perceive their lives in the future.

Another important element is the use of language. In some instances, the successful teacher must become a translator, since the language of his pupils may represent a complete lack or a distortion of acceptable English. Often the grammar the students use is the acceptable medium of exchange in the students' home or environment.

The successful teacher must be able to assess the native potential intelligence of the child and not rely on existing intelligence tests, since they measure learned behavior. He is aware that the tests provide a description of the child's present ability to handle academic materials and that, with proper training, the student will grow and show improvement

on future tests. The successful teacher of the disadvantaged will guide his students through the doors he opens for them. He will help them acquire more skills and knowledge needed to prepare for the world which lies ahead. Since he meets his students on equal terms, he does not condone poor work or make allowances for incompetence. He sets rules and regulations for his students and maintains high standards.

The successful teacher is also a good showman. He continually must add to his extensive repertory of well-constructed scripts and props--and gimmicks. He must be able to incorporate a sense of drama and high interest in all he does so he can capture the imaginations of his pupils and hold their attention.

As most successful teachers, our model teacher has knowledge of the content of the subjects he teaches. He, in fact, knows it so well that he does not have to rely on study guides. He is able to use his own knowledge and experience to best advantage. Although the successful teacher is not necessarily a specialist in a behavioral science, he is able to lead his students into a wider world. As a successful educator, he can be characterized by the phrase "ordered flexibility."

When working with disadvantaged students, teachers must explore and become proficient with various teaching methods so they can decide which one will work best in a given situation. Here are several that have been successful:

(Show slides along with the following)

1. Audiovisuals
2. Buzz groups
3. Discussion
4. Drama
5. Guided recreation
6. Guided study
7. Lecture
8. Memorization
9. Panel discussion
10. Question and answer
11. Role playing
12. Story-telling

13. Work groups

14. Workshop

I have included three things that you might be able to put to good use:

1. The Communications Gap

2. A Human Relations Garden

3. Soul Folk 'Chitling' Test (The Dove Counterbalance Intelligence Test)

As a conclusion, I will show slides of the Detroit distributive education coordinators and preparatory teachers working together and further preparing themselves to work effectively with the disadvantaged students in their classes.

#### REFERENCES

Passon, A. Harry. Education of the Disadvantaged--A Book of Readings. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., New York, 1967.

Tiedt, Sidney W. Teaching the Disadvantaged Child. Oxford University Press, New York, 1968.



# **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Summary of Participants' Evaluation**

## CONCLUSIONS

The Department of Distributive Education believes that the seminar accomplished its purpose (1) of making the participating teacher-coordinators more perceptive, more aware, and more knowledgeable concerning the problems of the disadvantaged; (2) of developing some guidelines for identifying the students with special needs and (3) of suggesting some ways to meet their needs. From the evaluations, 50 per cent of the participants said they were very satisfied with the seminar, and the other 50 per cent said they were quite satisfied. More than 70 per cent indicated the seminar had accomplished its original purpose, and the following comments bear this out:

"I believe my own attitude has been changed somewhat. Also, I have been motivated to try new ways and means in the classroom."

"The interchange of ideas which took place should help each person present try new ideas in his particular teaching situation."

". . . in the most interesting, effective and productive way I think possible."

"I think they were depending on how much information you had in the past."

"Everyone worked very hard to make this an excellent program, and the purposes were well-covered."

"We certainly became aware and identified the problems. It will be up to us as teachers to help find the solutions."

"I think so. In any degree of measurement, I think the conference was terrific--interesting and inspirational and I'm certainly inspired to do a better job this next year."

"Very much so. The need to be aware; to be able to identify; and to be more creative to seek solutions were very much emphasized in most of the speakers' talks."

"Indeed, I think we are all more aware of the problems. Second--to an extent--I think we need more training in this area. Third--I think we made a good start--more sessions are needed."

"I am more perceptive, more aware and will try to be more knowledgeable about the problems of the disadvantaged. I want to add to my ability to identify youth with special needs."

"I think that this will be answered when I see the completed report."

"A better understanding of The Disadvantaged - yes."

"I believe so! I hope that we can all use the bits of info we have gained. Workshops are of great value as a form of on-the-job training."

The comments made on the evaluation form can better state the reactions of the participants toward the seminar in general than we can, and their comments were:

"A week well spent."

"This was a very worthwhile project and would rate program well above average."

"The program on checker education was very good because it gave practical things which can be used."

"We should have a follow-up. Should have more seminars to up-date trends and new concepts."

"Development of specific materials based on analysis to use with students (special needs)."

"On the whole, I felt the workshop was very well-planned and presented."

"I felt it was most worthwhile and only hope it is the forerunner of many such acts of assistance this teacher trainer institution might be able to offer. My thanks for the opportunity of participating."

"On the whole, it was the best conference I ever attended. You picked a subject that was apropos of the times."

"More coordinators should be exposed to this type of concentration. More on suggested curriculum, equipment, etc.--something that is new. Thanks for the invitation."

"I hope that more of these can be held. Also, the state department, the colleges and universities will give us more help in pointing out what should be done for the disadvantaged."

"Enjoyed it and felt I learned a great deal; enjoyed the excellent resource people."

"We should have a follow-up session in January to discuss the implementation of any ideas picked up here."

"Now that we are all aware of these problems, more sessions are needed to cover more areas like the disadvantaged."

"An excellent workshop."

"As a newer teacher I found this very stimulating, and I might suggest something of this for more recent graduates of your D. E. teacher graduates."

"To those who had a hand in the organization, planning, preparation, and presentation of this program, which we hope is the forerunner of many future forms of assistance that we may participate in, I thank you for a job well done on behalf of ourselves and the countless students who may benefit from this initial experience."



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Department of Distributive Education believes that a follow-up session or sessions should be planned and scheduled for this group. This is also the expressed feeling of several of the teacher-coordinators who participated in the seminar. Their comments were as follows:

"We should have a follow-up. Should have more seminars to up-date trends and new concepts."

"I hope that more of these can be held. Also the state department, the colleges and universities will give us more help."

"We should have a follow-up session in January to discuss the implementation of any ideas picked up here."

"Now that we are all aware of these problems, more sessions are needed to cover more areas like the disadvantaged."

"To those who had a hand in the organization, planning, preparation and presentation of this program, we hope it is the forerunner of many future forms of assistance that we may participate in as coordinators."

The Department will seek approval and assistance from the Division of Vocational Education, Michigan Department of Education, for sponsoring a follow-up conference early next year concerning what they, the participants, have done since the seminar in July and also what others have accomplished in working with the disadvantaged.

# **APPENDIX**

**Seminar Program**

**Sub-Group Session Work Blanks**

**Evaluation Form**

**Communication Gap**

VOCATIONAL DISTRIBUTIVE EDUCATION  
TEACHER-COORDINATOR LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT  
SEMINAR CONCERNING THE DISADVANTAGED

P R O G R A M

Monday, July 27, 1970

Chairman, Mr. Adrian Trimpe, Head, Department  
of Distributive Education

- 11:30 - 12:00 Registration -- University Student Center
- 12:00 - 12:45 Lunch -- President's Dining Room
- 1:00 - 2:00 Welcome - Dr. George E. Kohrman, Dean  
College of Applied Sciences
- Seminar Operation -- Mr. Wendall B. Fidler, W. M. U.  
Associate Professor of Distributive Education
- Purposes and Objectives of the Seminar --  
Miss Ann Lind, Associate Project Director
- 2:00 - 2:45 Who Are the Disadvantaged? -- Mr. Jess M. Walker,  
Associate Professor of Teacher Education, W. M. U.
- 2:45 - 3:00 Pause for Coke
- 3:00 - 4:00 Problem Census -- Mrs. Constance Cooper,  
Intergroup Relations Specialist  
Detroit Public Schools

Tuesday, July 28, 1970

Chairman, Miss Ann Lind

- 8:30 - 10:00 Distributive Education and the Disadvantaged --  
Dr. Edward T. Ferguson, Jr., Research  
Specialist, The Center for Vocational  
and Technical Education, The Ohio  
State University
- 10:00 - 10:15 Coffee Break
- 10:15 - 12:00 Sub-Group Session #1
- 12:00 - 1:00 Lunch -- University Student Center, Room 157
- 1:00 - 2:15 Identifying and Counseling Disadvantaged Students for  
Distributive Education -- Mrs. Marjorie Peirce,  
Cass Technical High School, Detroit



Tuesday, July 28, continued

- 2:15 - 2:30 Pause for Coke
- 2:30 - 4:00 Securing Employer Commitment -- Mr. Lee D. Smith,  
Vice President, Jewel Food Stores, Chicago
- 6:00 Dinner and Barn Theater

Wednesday, July 29, 1970

Chairman, Miss Ann Lind

- 8:30 - 8:45 Oral Reports from Sub-Group Sessions
- 8:45 - 10:00 Distributive Education Subject Matter and the  
Disadvantaged -- Dr. James Bennett, Distributive  
Education Teacher-Educator, Rutgers University,  
New Brunswick, New Jersey
- 10:00 - 10:15 Coffee Break
- 10:15 - 12:00 Sub-Group Session #2
- 12:00 - 1:00 Lunch - University Student Center, Room 157
- 1:00 - 2:15 More Learning & Less Teaching  
Mr. John Kushner, Supervisor, Office Education  
Detroit Public Schools
- 2:15 - 2:30 Pause for Coke
- 2:30 - 4:00 Checker Education Demonstration -- Mr. William O. Haynes,  
Associate Professor of Distributive Education, W. M. U. --  
and Food Distribution Students

Thursday, July 30, 1970

Chairman, Miss Ann Lind

- 8:30 - 8:45 Oral Reports from Sub-Group Sessions
- 8:45 - 9:45 A Distributive Education Teacher-Coordinator Looks at  
Working with the Disadvantaged -- Mrs. Augusta  
Hatton, Detroit Public Schools
- 9:45 - 10:00 Coffee Break
- 10:00 - 10:45 What DECA Can Do for the Disadvantaged -- Mr. Robert  
Bailey, Detroit Public Schools
- 10:45 - 12:00 Sub-Group Session #3

Thursday, July 30, continued

12:00 - 1:00      Lunch - University Student Center, Room 157

1:00 - 2:30      Panel Discussion -- The Services Offered by Government  
and Social Agencies for the Disadvantaged  
Panel Chairman - Wendall B. Fidler

2:30 - 2:45      Pause for Coke

2:45 - 4:00      Supporting Cooperative Programs Designed for the  
Disadvantaged -- Mr. Richard Shupe, Supervisor  
of Office and Distributive Education, Michigan  
Department of Education

7:00 - 8:00      Sub-Group Session #4

Friday, July 31, 1970

Chairman, Miss Ann Lind

8:30 - 9:45      A Superintendent Looks at Educational Programs for  
the Disadvantaged -- Dr. Mark E. Lewis,  
Superintendent of Schools, Benton Harbor

9:45 - 10:00      Coffee Break

10:00 - 11:12      A Distributive Education Supervisor Looks at Teacher  
Preparation for Working with the Disadvantaged --  
Mrs. Theresa Brinson, Detroit Public Schools

### Evaluation of the Seminar

11:30 - 1:30      Luncheon -- University Student Center  
President's Dining Room

**Closing Remarks - Mr. Adrian Trimpe**

## Presentation of Certificates

### SUB-GROUP SESSION TOPICS

## I. Sub-Group Session #1

**Tuesday, July 28**  
**10:15 - 12:00**

1. How can D.E. meet its responsibilities to serve youth with special needs?

## II. Sub-Group Session #2

Wednesday, July 29  
10:15 - 12:00

1. How can you identify students who have special needs?
2. How can you secure employer commitment to provide part-time job opportunities for students with special needs?
3. How can D.E. develop flexible instructional content involving the basic occupational competencies essential to entry-level jobs for the disadvantaged youth?

### III. Sub-Group Session #3

Thursday, July 30  
10:45 - 12:00

1. What is the teacher-coordinator's role in using the "more learning and less teaching" approach with disadvantaged students?
2. What instructional content and techniques does checker education offer the teacher in working with the disadvantaged?
3. What might be some of the problems encountered in working to meet the special needs of students?
4. How can DECA involve the disadvantaged in meaningful activities demanding follow-through with responsibilities and duties?

## IV. Sub-Group Session #4

Thursday, July 30  
7:00 - 9:00 p.m.

1. What governmental and social agencies can you call upon for guidance and assistance in meeting the needs of the disadvantaged? (local, state, and national)

**REMINDER:** Complete sub-group report for the week this Thursday evening.  
Copy must be turned in by Friday morning at the latest.



Dept. of Distributive Education  
College of Applied Sciences  
Western Michigan University  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49001

Vocational Distributive Education  
Teacher-Coordinator Leadership Development  
Seminar Concerning the Disadvantaged  
July 27-31, 1970

### EVALUATION

- I. What is your general opinion of the seminar? On the scale, draw a circle around the X that most nearly expresses how you feel.

| <u>Very</u><br><u>Dissatisfied</u> | <u>Quite</u><br><u>Dissatisfied</u> | <u>So-So</u> | <u>Quite</u><br><u>Satisfied</u> | <u>Very</u><br><u>Satisfied</u> |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|

X

X

X

X

X

- II. In your estimation, what were the highlights of the best session(s)?

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- III. Were the 3 purposes of the workshop accomplished?

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- IV. Indicate any weaknesses you encountered.

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- V. Additional comments (use back of sheet if necessary).

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## COMMUNICATIONS GAP

Remember when Hippie meant big in the hips,  
And a Trip involved travel . . . in cars, planes and ships?  
And Pot was a vessel for cooking things in,  
And Hooked was what Grandmother's rug might have been?  
And Fix was a verb that meant to mend or repair,  
And to Be-In meant simply existing somewhere?  
When Neat meant organized, tidy, and clean!  
And Grass was a ground cover, normally green!  
When Lights and not people were switched on and off,  
And the Pill was what you might take for a cough?  
And Camp meant to quarter, outdoors in a tent,  
And Pop was what the weasel went?  
And Groovy meant furrowed with channels and hollows,  
And Birds were winged creatures like Robins and Swallows!  
When Fuzz was a substance, fuzzy like lint,  
And Bread came from bakeries, not from the mint!  
And Square meant a ninety degree angled form,  
And Cool was a temperature not quite warm!  
When Roll was a bun, and Rock was a stone,  
And Hang-up was what you did to a phone?  
When Chicken was poultry, and Bag was a sack,  
and Junk, trashy cast-offs and old brick-a-brack.  
When Jam was preserves you spread on your bread,  
And Crazy meant balmy, not right in the head.

When Cat was a feline, a kitten grown up,  
And Tea was a liquid, you drank from a cup!  
When Swinger was someone who swung on a swing,  
And a Pad was a soft sort of cushiony thing?  
When Way-Out meant distant, and far, far away,  
And a man couldn't sue you for calling him gay.  
And to Dig meant to shovel all day in the dirt,  
And Button was what you did to a shirt?  
When Tough described meat too unyielding to chew,  
And making a scene was a rude thing to do!  
Words once so sensible, sober and serious  
Are making the freak-scene like psychedelerious.  
It's groovy, man, groovy, but English it's not,  
Me-thinks that the language has gone straight to pot!